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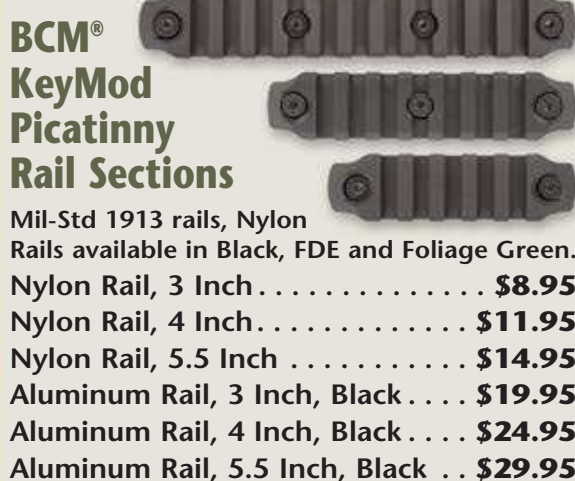
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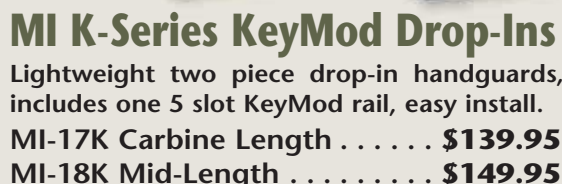
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# TACTICAL WEAPONS®

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 3  
August/Sept. 2015

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# GO BIG OR GO HOME



## MORE POWER, MORE ACCURACY, AND MORE BANG FOR THE BUCK!

That's what we Americans want when it comes to both personal firepower and our nation's military might. That's also nothing to be ashamed of, as some liberal media broadcasters proclaim to the uninformed voters on the internet and television.

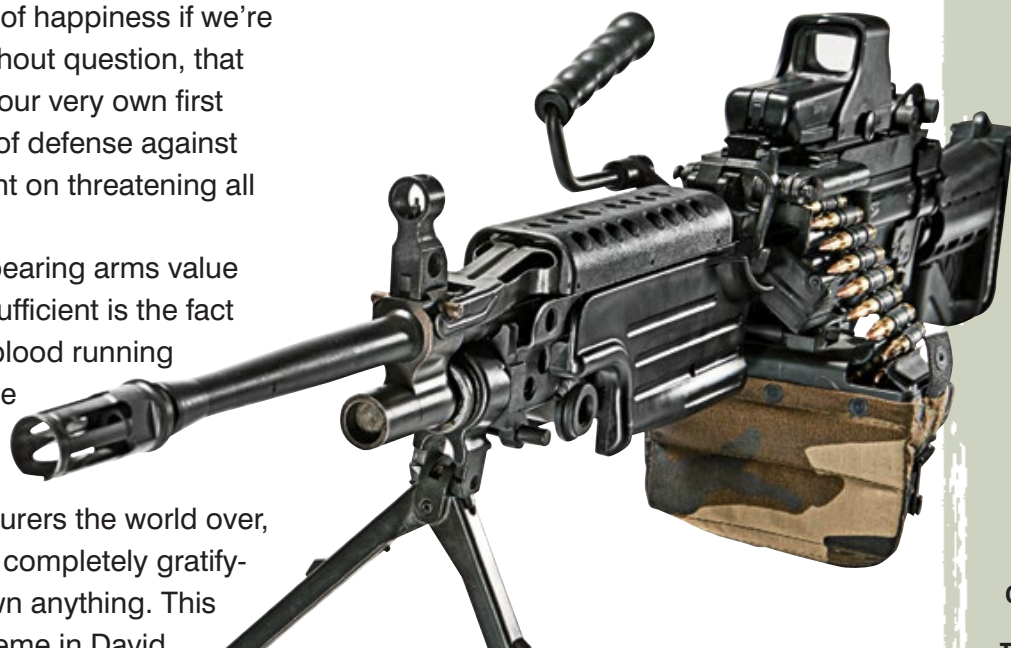
Something else we can add to our "wants" listing of power, accuracy and value is our inner drive for becoming as self-reliant as possible. Meaning, we take our Second Amendment right more seriously than any other. And why wouldn't we? We couldn't possibly enjoy life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness if we're 6 feet under. We know, without question, that we are and always will be our very own first responders—our first line of defense against evil-doers who are hell-bent on threatening all of us law-abiding citizens.

Riding shotgun to our bearing arms value and our desire to be self-sufficient is the fact that there's do-it-yourself blood running through our veins. Sure, we all like to purchase shiny new firearms from the scores of quality manufacturers the world over, but there's just something completely gratifying about building your own anything. This issue dives into the DIY theme in David Bahde's piece on putting together a 6.8 SPC rifle that's, like the name implies, special indeed. Next, sniper instructor Eduardo Abril De Fontcuberta gathers all of the key ingredients to build a world-class, F-T/R, single-shot .308 capable of sick accuracy out to 1,000 yards. The DIY hits keep on coming, especially if you're not a military-surplus purist. If you are purist, then do not check out Denis Prsbrey's Mosin-Nagant sporterizing project.

Sure, there are times when less is more, but not when it comes to our way of thinking in the editorial offices of *Tactical Weapons* magazine. We're definitely of the bigger-is-better and more-options-are-better mindsets. Case in point: Look at the Sig MCX rifle being wielded on our cover. The super-fast, barrel-swap-out machine affords operators one gun that can be chambered in 300 BLK, 7.62x39mm or 5.56mm. But the options don't end there. Three Sig stock options (one of them a folder)

and the SBX Stabilizing Brace are compatible with the MCX, plus you can have your choice of forends, barrel lengths and muzzle devices. In a nutshell, the MCX can be configured in more than 180 different ways. How's that for a "have it your way" sort of carbine?

We know you want bigger, so we asked Richard Johnson to round up today's best-in-breed, big-bore ARs in 300 BLK, 7.62mm NATO and .458 SOCOM. And for full-auto fare, Fred Mastison zips us through the history of America's M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, plus we get a sneak peek at FNH USA's semi-automatic SAW that the rest of us can own!



**The 5.56mm M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, or SAW, has been giving U.S. troops more firepower since 1984, and now FNH USA is offering a semi-automatic version for civilians—the M249S.**

Straight 8 Photo

If you need more big blasts in your arsenal, look to the reports on the 12-gauge MKA 1919, a shotgun that looks and shoots like an AR-platform rifle, and Beretta's Tactical 1301 speed demon. She's ready for duty or the shooting competition circuit.

Want a little peace and quiet added into the mix? Check out our roundup of today's top-of-the-line suppressors. And for peace of mind at home, in the friendly skies or on the road to the shooting range, feast your eyes on our collection of tank-tough long-gun cases.

There's a bunch more in our tactical toolbox for this issue, which we certainly hope will get your "go big or go home" engines cranking. Enjoy the ride. —The Editors

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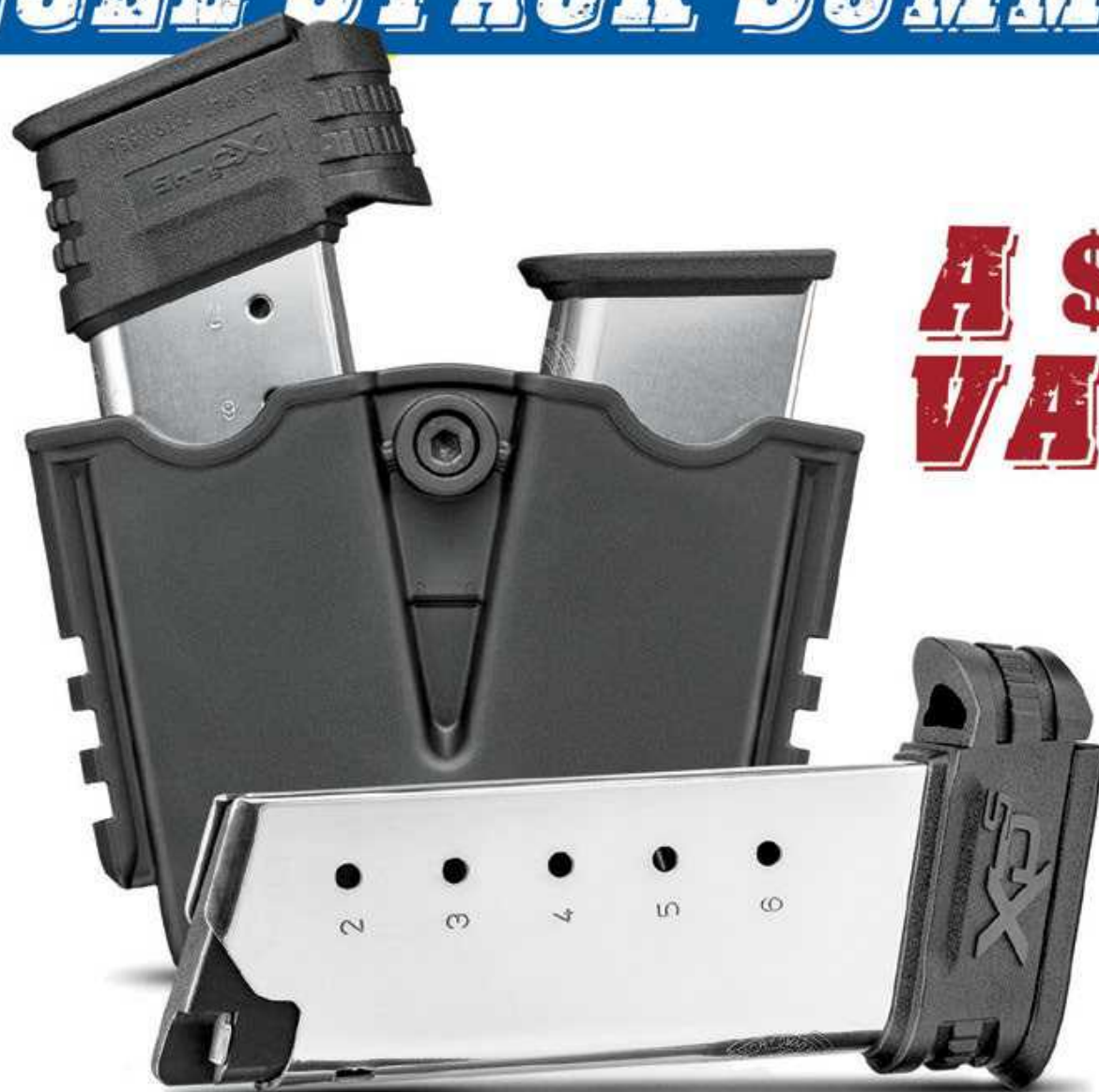
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Available in semi-auto or select-fire (shown), the Sig Sauer MCX can easily be adapted to fire 300 Blackout, 5.56mm NATO or 7.62x39mm cartridges—but the modularity doesn't stop there!







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# SIG SAUER MCXTREME

STORY & PHOTOS **BY SEAN UTLEY**

Entirely new weapons systems are difficult to come by. The AR platform is the mainstay and the prevailing core of any American firearms innovation, and while it is a great platform, the inability to move beyond the AR may signal a lack of new ideas. Or maybe it's a sign that the AR platform is one of few that is optimal for continued variant development. The current direction of weapons development may be primarily dictated by tighter budgets, which are reserved for funding operator training and replacing complete weapons and parts. So, operator familiarity and parts compatibility/commonality become very important and necessary traits in any platform. However you view it, it's clear that AR-based weapons systems will be around indefinitely; future innovations may come in the form of redesigns and enhancements as opposed to completely original ideas and designs.

There is room for much improvement here, however, and Sig Sauer seems to have capitalized on that opportunity by unleashing the MCX, a new weapons system that harnesses technology the company has been perfecting for the past several years.

The MCX was designed from its inception as a complete, modular weapons system to be chambered for and

to exploit the benefits of the 300 Blackout cartridge to include, as a forethought, suppressed shooting. Sig Sauer claims that no other weapon has been designed this way from the start. The company's engineers also focused on the platform's weight and modularity. Sources within Sig divulged that certain customers with certain credentials asked for a weapons system to replace their current weapons. It needed to be as quiet as an HK MP5SD when suppressed and chambered in 300 BLK as a starting point.

## PISTON DRIVEN

Arguably one of the least attractive traits of the AR is the standard direct impingement system. The MCX is based on Sig's short-stroke gas piston operating system. This piston system is not like those currently on the market. It actually uses a unique dual return spring/single operating rod system. And it is auto-regulating. The piston position is able to self adjust based on system pressure. This design means the operator can shoot suppressed and non-suppressed, mixing subsonic and supersonic ammunition, without penalty. It's difficult to get a gas system to run reliably in all of those varying scenarios, but this ability resides within the MCX.





## THE “HAVE IT YOUR WAY” MCX

- 1 Skeletonized, side-folding SAS stock
- 2 Telescoping stock
- 3 Monolithic upper receiver assembly
- 4 Lower receiver with ambidextrous mag release, bolt release and safety
- 5 Short KeyMod handguard
- 6 Long KeyMod handguard
- 7 16-inch barrel assembly with three-prong flash suppressor
- 8 9-inch barrel assembly with three-prong flash suppressor
- 9 .30-caliber SRD762-QD Silencer
- 10 .30-caliber SRD762 Silencer
- 11 7.62x39mm magazine
- 12 5.56mm/300 BLK magazine
- 13 Sig Sauer SBX Stabilizing Brace
- 14 Tubular side-folding stock

## TW INSTANT CLASSIC:

For **EXCLUSIVE** video of the new Sig Sauer MCX being fired in full auto, please visit [tactical-life.com](http://tactical-life.com).

The MCX sports many features that are likened to the AR, but with some interesting differences. The bolt has the same AR-15 anatomy from the bolt face to the cam pinhole. The MCX's bolt is also same overall length as an AR-15's, but the MCX's lacks gas rings, so the width of the bolt body continues rearward slightly farther, then immediately notches down to form the tail end. It locks and closes completely during its rotation, and both the bolt and carrier are nickel-boron coated. The carrier is shortened to 3.5 inches and weighs 5.2 ounces, and it's the same diameter as its AR siblings. The operating rod attaches to the top of the carrier via a notch cut into the carrier, and the whole thing is cycled by dual return springs riding on guide rods that are secured to the operating rod.

Could this be what a piston-driven AR was always meant to be? Yes, there are more parts here, but the system is very simplistic once you see it, and then you'll get a good understanding of how Sig rethought the MCX's design and function.

The MCX has the familiar AR upper and lower receiver layout that we know, but some caveats have been added here. The upper receiver is hardened in select areas, and Sig has developed replaceable parts for those areas that wear the most. One such part is the metal cam-path insert on the side of the upper receiver. Other replaceable parts include a feed

ramp insert and the ambidextrous charging handle latch. These items are all steel inserts or pins. The forward assist has an aluminum housing that can be replaced if it wears out. These features reveal that the MCX was meant for long-term use in harsh conditions. In essence, you won't have to scrap the upper receiver after hard use, only replace some parts. The lower receiver's controls require no retraining, as they are the same as an AR's, while the magazine release, bolt release and safety selector are all ambidextrous. Aftermarket drop-in triggers will be right at home, too.

## REDEFINING MODULARITY

“Modularity” is a term that is thrown around frequently, and the MCX is likely one of the truest examples of that term. The upper receiver is a monolithic design with a long, continuous top rail. The upper is also designed to accept handguards of different lengths. Currently, Sig offers short and long models. These KeyMod handguards are designed with different inner diameters so that they can fit over a sound suppressor if desired, or you can opt for the smaller-diameter handguard. They are also available in carbon fiber. The longer handguard acts as a continuation of the one-piece, 13-inch top rail, giving you over 17 inches of top rail to work with. Of course, these KeyMod handguards will accept a myriad of accessories available





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from Sig, such as vertical foregrips and sling plate adapters.

Operators can quickly interchange barrels by loosening two screws on the upper receiver. Both 9- and 16-inch barrels are available, and you can quickly change from 300 BLK to 5.56mm NATO with a barrel/operating rod swap. The 300 BLK barrels have 1-in-6-inch twist rates, while the 5.56mm NATO barrels have 1-in-7-inch twist rates. A 1-in-9.5-inch-twist 7.62x39mm barrel is also available, though it also requires you to change out the magazine. Civilian model barrels will get a nitride coating regardless of their length or caliber. Military/LE barrels can be chrome lined or nitrided depending on the customer's requirements.

The lower receiver accepts STANAG-pattern magazines, but it's also configurable like the rest

of the rifle. There is no buffer tube like that of the AR. Instead, an attachment point resides at the rear of the receiver. This attachment point allows for different stocks to be fitted. You can choose from a side-folding, skeletonized SAS stock; a tubular, side-folding stock; or a telescoping stock. If you want to go the pistol route, Sig also offers its SBX Stabilizing Brace as an option.

Also, it should be noted that the MCX's upper is compatible with any standard mil-spec AR-15 lower, and Sig offers a kit to convert such a lower to accept the different stocks by eliminating the buffer tube. So, LE agencies, for example, can more easily upgrade their current inventory with the MCX.

### **SILENT STRIKER**

Sig Sauer has been relentless in the development of its own line of "Silencers." As mentioned before, the MCX was designed around



**ABOVE:** Users can quickly switch between 9- or 16-inch 300 BLK, 5.56mm or 7.62x39mm barrels. The nitrided 300 BLK barrel (shown) has a 1-in-6-inch twist rate.

**ABOVE LEFT:** Because of the piston operating system and lack of a buffer tube, shooters can utilize a side-folding stock like the skeletonized SAS model, which quickly reduces the overall length.

suppressor use, as a complete weapon system, and it is specifically optimized to work with Sig's cans.

Sig's SRD Silencers are technologically advanced and offer excellent sound reduction, durability and light weight. With their Taper-Lok Fast Attach muzzle devices, you can opt for an SRD762-QD and have every caliber of the MCX covered, as it is rated to handle up to .300 Winchester Magnum cartridges. The SRD762-QDTi, a titanium version, is also available. It is a slightly larger can than the SRD762-QD, but this offers more volume in the Silencer for greater sound reduction. Because of the Grade 5 titanium construction, it is lighter than the 718 Inconel SRD762-QD by 1.2 ounces. You can also opt for a 5.56mm NATO-specific suppressor like the SRD556, SRD556-QD or SRD556-QDTi if you're confident that you'll only be running 5.56mm NATO ammo through your MCX.

Although the MCX is ideally paired with Sig Silencers, the company informed me that the MCX will run properly with the suppressor brand of your choosing because it is backwards compatible with traditionally designed 1/2x28- or 5/8x24-threaded muzzle devices.

### **FULL-AUTO BLACKOUT**

I was able to shoot two select-fire versions of the MCX while at the Sig Sauer Academy in Epping, New Hampshire: a 16-inch-barreled carbine and a 9-inch-barreled SBR. For this test, I used Sig's own Elite Performance 220-grain, subsonic 300 BLK ammo. I ran this load both suppressed and unsuppressed without issue.

The MCX has a light recoil impulse, and it was easy to

— Continued on page 124

To enhance its modularity even further, Sig Sauer made it easy to swap out the MCX's handguard. The long KeyMod forend makes it easy to add mission-critical accessories.



# PMAG 17 GL9

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- Removable floor plate with paint pen dot matrix panels
- Compatible with all generations of Glock 9mm pistols
- Made in the USA



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# AUG/A3 M1

## NEXT-GEN AUG REDEFINES BATTLE-GRADE FIREPOWER

By Eduardo Abril de Fontcuberta



.....

The new AUG/A3 M1 was designed to utilize several sighting options, including a built-in 1.5X optic (shown). During testing, everyone on the range was impressed with the bullpup's handling, high-tech engineering and accurate results.

.....



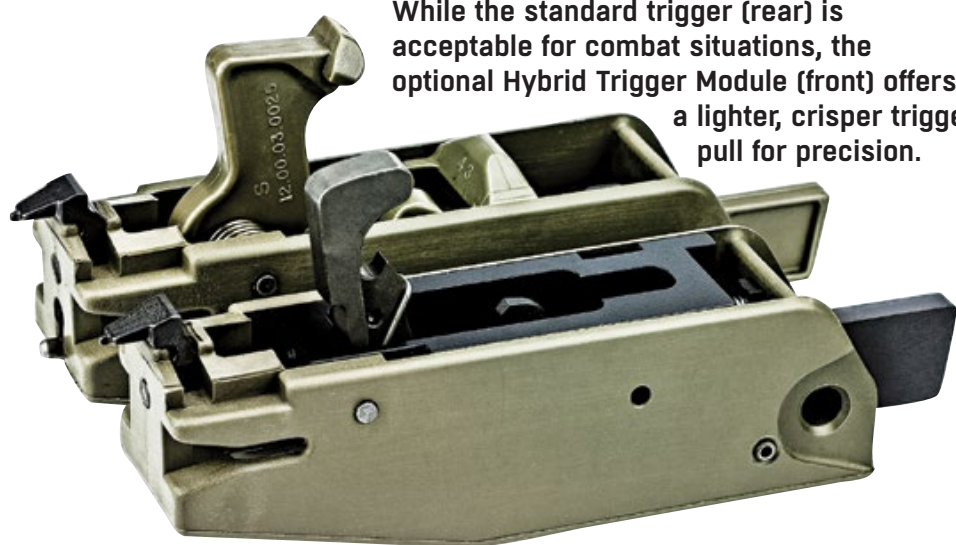
# BULLPUP

Sean Utley Photos

**W**HEN I TESTED the first U.S.-made AUG back in 2008, I was impressed because Steyr Arms was able to replicate the quality and feel of one of the rifles I have in my heart—the Austrian-made AUG. Today, in 2015, I am even more impressed with the American-made Steyr AUG/A3 M1, as the company has even improved on its European brother.

Why? Well, I have been shooting Austrian AUGs for more than 30 years, and I simply can't think of a better overall rifle. Nothing is perfect, including the Austrian AUG, as it had a less-than-perfect trigger and required unconventional reloads thanks to its bullpup configuration. But even though those two little issues had been polished over the years in Austria, and they have been finally corrected by the American branch of Steyr Arms. Now, after installing the optional Hybrid Trigger Module and addressing the bullpup's handling nuisances, Steyr has made what many will consider the best AUG ever.





While the standard trigger (rear) is acceptable for combat situations, the optional Hybrid Trigger Module (front) offers a lighter, crisper trigger pull for precision.



Sean Utley Photos

The new AUG/A3 M1 features several short Picatinny rails for attaching accessories as well as a Vltor quick-detach sling swivel.

## AUG HISTORY

In the early 1970s, Steyr Mannlicher developed the AUG (*Armee Universal Gewehr*, or “universal army rifle”), a 5.56mm NATO bullpup rifle. The AUG was selected and adopted by the Austrian Army as the StG 77 (*Sturmgewehr 77*) in 1977. The AUG bullpup was a huge commercial success, and in its original configuration, it was adopted by the armed forces of more than 35 countries around the world.

Due to restrictive regulations back in the late 1980s, bringing Austrian AUGs into the U.S. became increasingly difficult. Eventually, in 1989, it became impossible. After a short period in 1997 in which Steyr and GSI joined forces and bypassed the 1994 Federal Assault Weapons Ban to bring 3,000 “legal AUGs” whose military features had been removed, no more Austrian AUGs ever made it into the U.S. again.

Then Steyr decided to begin building them in the U.S., but the actual undertaking was much more complex than as originally planned. The first try was a rather unsuccessful one that ended up with new manage-

ment at Steyr U.S. and a U.S. company manufacturing AUG clones. I am not authorized to disclose the details of this operation, but it could well make a script for a spy movie. The second attempt was also unsuccessful. Steyr U.S. partnered with Sabre Defence, whose state-of-the-art manufacturing facility could build the high-quality AUG. But Sabre ran into problems with State Department, ending the output of the ultra-accurate American-made AUGs abruptly in 2009.

But Steyr never gave up. The third attempt was successful. Now high-quality AUGs are made in Bessemer, Alabama. For American shooters, this long road to excellence has brought the best U.S.-made AUG and one of the top, if not the best, battle rifles ever.

## AMERICAN AUGs

Steyr Arms offers three AUG variants. The first of the family is the AUG/A3 SA, a semi-automatic version of the AUG battle rifle. It features a Picatinny top rail and feeds from Steyr’s translucent polymer magazines. The second variant, the AUG/A3 SA NATO, as its name implies, can utilize standard 5.56mm NATO magazines. The new AUG/A3 M1 is available with a short Picatinny top rail, a longer, slightly taller rail for different sights and optics, or an integrated 1.5X or 3X optic.

I recently tested a version of the AUG/A3 M1 with an integral 1.5X optic, which is exceptionally bright and clear. According to Alexandria Maltezo of OATH Ammo, it’s “the clearest scope I’ve seen on any carbine,” and the sight is positioned 1.95 inches over the stock comb for a solid cheekweld. The

new turret design requires a simple coin or flat screwdriver to make windage and elevation changes. The 1.5X optic features a medium crosshair with a range-finding circle, while

the 3X optic has a medium crosshair with a thinner internal crosshair inside the range-finding circle. The M1 scope has also been modernized with the addition of three Picatinny rail sections around the scope tube.

For those who prefer a variable-power scope or a red dot paired with a 3X magnifier, the taller rail available for the AUG/A3 M1 was designed with 16 numbered slots, extending 2.57 inches back from the receiver and sitting 0.82 inches over the stock comb. The short rail was created for the minimalist who just requires an Aim-point Micro T-2, a CompM4 or a simple red-dot sight. This rail has 11 slots and ends at the back of the receiver. It’s positioned only 0.44 inches above the comb.

The rails and sights are easily interchangeable via three base screws that thread from the underside of the top of the receiver. The receiver was also updated to replace the permanently affixed front sling swivel with a Vltor quick-detach sling

## SPEC BOX

### STEYR AUG/A3 M1

**CALIBER:** 5.56mm NATO

**BARREL:** 16 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 28.25 inches

**WEIGHT:** 7.7-8.8 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** Synthetic

**SIGHTS:** Two optics-ready rails, 1.5X optic or 3X optic

**ACTION:** Piston-operated semi-auto

**FINISH:** Black, OD green or MUD

**CAPACITY:** 30+1

**MSRP:** \$2,099-\$2,599

“With the AUG/A3 M1, you can quickly switch barrels and sights while remaining super accurate.”





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## PERFORMANCE

### STEYR AUG/A3 M1

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 53 Superformance V-MAX	3,465	1.38
Hornady 55 Varmint Express V-MAX	3,240	0.68
GECO 55 FMJ	3,314	0.88
OATH 65 Match	2,700	0.75

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps per MFG specs, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

Dale Comstock, an ex-Delta operator and "American Badass," was also impressed with the AUG's performance.

will operate in the most adverse conditions.

The very distinctive stock is built from fiberglass-reinforced polymer, and to add to the new options available, Steyr is now offering the AUG/A3 M1 in matte black, OD green and MUD, similar to FDE.

I fully understand that some shooters like to have myriad aftermarket parts and customizing options for their carbines, but in my opinion, the U.S.-made AUG/A3 needs very little in the extras department. It comes from the factory with all the classic features and benefits that established it as the pinnacle of modern rifle design, including expedited disassembly as well as

swivel, which makes it fast and easy for users to attach or remove a two-point sling. Users of single-point slings can remove the front sling swivel entirely, if so desired.

The receiver itself is an Eloxal-coated aircraft-grade aluminium piece of art, and the gas system is adjustable. The short-stroke piston operating system of the AUG/

A3 M1 runs exceptionally cleaner by nature because all of the firing gases vents out of the front of the rifle. The AUG's opposing stainless steel guide rods, affixed to the bolt carrier, glide effortlessly inside the receiver for unparalleled smoothness in operation as well as exceptional reliability. Dual gas-adjustment settings ensure the AUG/A3 M1

## GET YOUR SSG 69 NOW!

**T**he Steyr SSG 69 (*Scharfschützengewehr* 69) is one of the best sniper rifles ever made, but time may be running out for you to own a new, unfired one. The Austrian factory has stopped manufacturing them after more than 40 years, and the last 1,000 rifles are in the U.S., where they'll be distributed exclusively by CDNN. (CDNN made the order of the last SSG 69s through Steyr Arms.) For decades, Steyr's "green rifle" was considered the best sniper rifle around, not because it was an Austrian work of art or because it was adopted by armies all around the world, or even because it was many years ahead of its time, with a synthetic stock and a detachable magazine. The reason was simple: its accuracy.

**SNIPER GRADE:** Back in the 1980s, when just a few custom rifles were sub-MOA accurate, the mean, green SSG 69 rifle was consistently shooting 0.5-MOA groups. It also did so with most match ammunition.

Years passed and, sure, the SSG 69 lacked the ergonomics of newer rifles currently in vogue, with fully adjustable stocks and Picatinny rails all around, but it remained a very competitive design, and with little modifications, it's as capable as new designs. It had an added bonus: It

weighed between 8.3 and 9.2 pounds. This is an awesome feature, especially today, when most sniper rifles capable of 0.5-MOA groups weigh nearly twice as much.

The Steyr SSG 69 rifles are currently available in the PII configuration (.243 Winchester, .22-250 Remington or .308 Winchester) with a heavy 25.6-inch, 1-in-12-inch-twist barrel and no iron sights, or the PIV configuration designed for CQB and suppressed missions with a 16.1-inch, 1-in-10-inch-twist barrel chambered in .308 Winchester. It has a long muzzle brake and barrel profile meant for reflex suppressors and heavy bullets.

**MY SSG 69:** I started my sniper career with a Mauser 66 and then moved up to a SSG 69 PI. This had been my competition sniper rifle until 2008, when I bought my Steyr SSG 08. I believe that those Austrian-made, hammer-forged barrels and ultra-sleek actions are the best out there.

I never phased out the SSG 69, and it has become one of my go-to hunting rifles. It has served me well for over 15 years and 3,350 rounds of .308 Winchester ammo, with an incredible average accuracy of 0.577 MOA. Now it will be joined by a new and unmodified SSG 69 PI to honor the history of the best sniper rifle ever.





simple conversion to left-hand operation, which requires replacement of the standard bolt with the optional left-eject bolt and swapping the ejection port cover.

Especially impressive is the quick-change barrel with its collapsible foregrip. You can swap out the barrel assembly in just a few seconds by pressing a side release. Don't ask me how it accomplishes this, but the AUG/A3 M1 will hold its zero after swapping out the barrel.


Speaking of barrels, the Steyr AUG/A3 M1 comes with a 16-inch, cold-hammer-forged barrel with six-groove, 1-in-9-inch, right-hand twist rifling. But, if you'd like another barrel length, there are more options available on the market, including 18-, 20- and 24-inch pipes. There's even a 9mm conversion kit.

### A3 ON THE RANGE

Steyr has always been synonymous with mythical accuracy in my mind, and this one is no different. I've shot incredible groups with my old AUG, and the AUG/A3 M1, with its U.S.-made cold-hammer-forged barrel, proved to be just as accurate.

The secret here is a combination of the high-quality barrel and the new Hybrid Trigger Module available as an option from Steyr Arms. The standard combat trigger is a good one for a battle rifle, but the Hybrid Trigger Module is simply mind blowing. This enhancement cuts the trigger pull nearly in half, from around 8 pounds to a very comfy 5.19 pounds on average, and it brings a completely different feel to the AUG with its smooth take-up and a crisp break. This trigger option is a must for me.

The new Steyr proved itself on the range and produced some impressive sub-MOA groups with most of the test ammo. Shooting such sub-MOA groups with a 16-inch-barreled carbine is impressive. With the 16-inch barrel, you can expect five-shot groups of 1.5 MOA at 100 yards on average with military-grade ammunition. And when you're shooting match-grade ammo, you can expect sub-MOA groups. It does not get much better than this from such a short barrel, and if you consider the AUG's overall length, it may be the most accurate military carbine measuring less than 29 inches long.

With the AUG/A3 M1, you can quickly switch barrels and sights while remaining super accurate. The Steyr AUG/A3 M1 should become a bestseller in a tactical market that's saturated with M4 clones. It's super accurate, configurable and incredibly cool. For more information, visit [steyrarms.com](http://steyrarms.com) or call 205-417-8644. 

## Vietnam Era M40

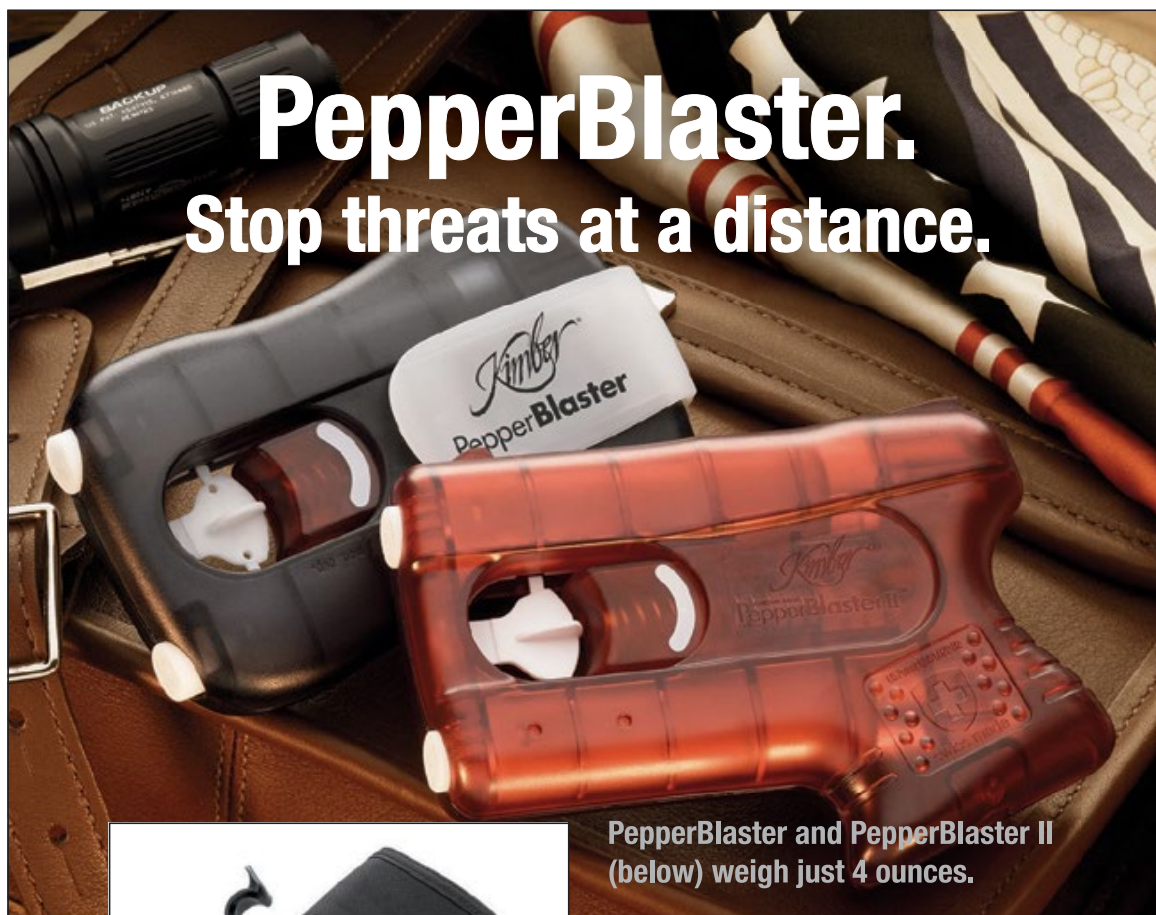


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The M249 SAW light machine gun, an Americanized version of the FN Minimi, has served the U.S. military for over 30 years. Shown with an EOTech HWS.



# POWER SAW

**It may be long in the tooth, but America's M249 LMG still rips out 5.56mm fire superiority on the front lines.**

BY FRED MASTISON • STRAIGHT 8 PHOTOS





The 5.56mm M249 feeds from belts as well as detachable box magazines, and it's available with a folding bipod and a fixed or collapsible stock (shown).

**There are few things that stir a more primal grin than the sound of a belt-fed machine gun.**

The pounding of the rounds running downrange, coupled with the light *ping* sounds as the brass and links hit the ground—it's an experience you won't soon forget.

While there is no shortage of guns that will fill this fully automatic category, one in particular has found a place in the psyche of gun aficionados, the M249 squad automatic weapon (SAW).

Generally just called the "SAW," the M249 has seen action in every major conflict involving the United States since the invasion of Panama in December of 1989. The SAW is still in use today with only a few modifications. At this time, there are over five different variants of the SAW in use in the U.S. military. The SAW is an Ameri-

can adaptation of a popular Belgian light machine gun manufactured by FN Herstal. Its original weapon was designated the FN Minimi (*Mini Mitrailleur* or "mini machine gun"). Very little was changed from the original Belgian design. Ultimately, the manufacturing of the new SAW would fall to the American subsidiary of FN Herstal, FN Manufacturing, based in Columbia, SC.

### CUTTING THROUGH TIME

The history of the American development of the SAW is one similar to many other military weapon systems. Yet it has a few twists of which most people are unaware. During the 1960s, the military began several studies on options to replace the effective, but heavy, M60 machine gun. The military was in need of a very specific weapon to fill the gap. The M16 was a good

weapon, but it was incapable of sustained automatic fire. The M60 weighed as much as a bus, and the venerable M14s and BARs had essentially been put in mothballs.

The parameters for a new weapon were narrow and held some very specific points. The two main points, though, were that the machine gun had to be light and capable of sustained automatic fire. In 1968, the Army Small Arms Program set the ball in motion to find a weapon that fit the parameters set forth. The design and ammunition requirements were fluid to say the least. At one point, the Army considered using a weapon that fired flechettes. That idea fell to the side and development continued. When the first wave of designs, submissions and research was complete, the Army was able to better set out its design requirements of the new "squad automatic weapon."

The design specifications for the gun included both 5.56mm and, interestingly, 6mm ammunition requirements. The 5.56mm NATO round was still considered underpowered for combat, and the 6mm was an attempt to remedy that. In fact, the originally planned version of the SAW leaned heavily towards being chambered in 6mm. As testing began, real concerns began to surface about the 6mm round. The logistics of introducing a new round into the inventory and the headaches that went with it were legion. This, coupled with improvements made in the case, turned the gun back towards the 5.56mm NATO.



## ANATOMY OF THE M249 SAW

- 1 Interchangeable heavy barrel
- 2 Piston assembly
- 3 Vented heat shield
- 4 Aperture rear sight
- 5 Cover and feed mechanism assembly
- 6 Charging handle
- 7 Feeding tray
- 8 Bolt assembly
- 9 Slide assembly
- 10 Return rod and transfer mechanism
- 11 Buttstock and buffer assembly
- 12 Sling-attachment hook
- 13 Return spring housing
- 14 Hardcoat anodized receiver
- 15 Oversized triggerguard
- 16 Ribbed forend with hand stop
- 17 Built-in bipod
- 18 Gas cylinder assembly

The initial prototype testing began in early 1974 with three submissions: a heavier version of the existing M16 called the HBAR, FN's Minimi and the Heckler & Koch 23A1. Almost six years later, and with an encyclopedia of revisions and modifications, a final decision was made. In May of 1980, the FN Minimi was awarded the contract for further development. It would be an "official weapon" of the U.S. military in 1988. The final step took place in 1984, when the weapon entered service with the U.S. Army—a journey of over 16 years from concept to trigger-pulling on the front lines.

### THE SAW'S TEETH

The M249 SAW is a gas-operated, air-cooled, belt-fed machine gun. It comes standard with a bipod that conveniently folds up into the base of the forend. It is primarily belt-fed via disintegrating metallic links. Ammunition is carried in either 200-round plastic drums or in soft pouches holding 100 rounds each. These clip easily to the underside of the weapon. An unusual and strong attribute of this gun is that it can be run with standard M16 magazines as well. While not a preferred method, it is a unique feature that allows this gun to stay in the fight even when

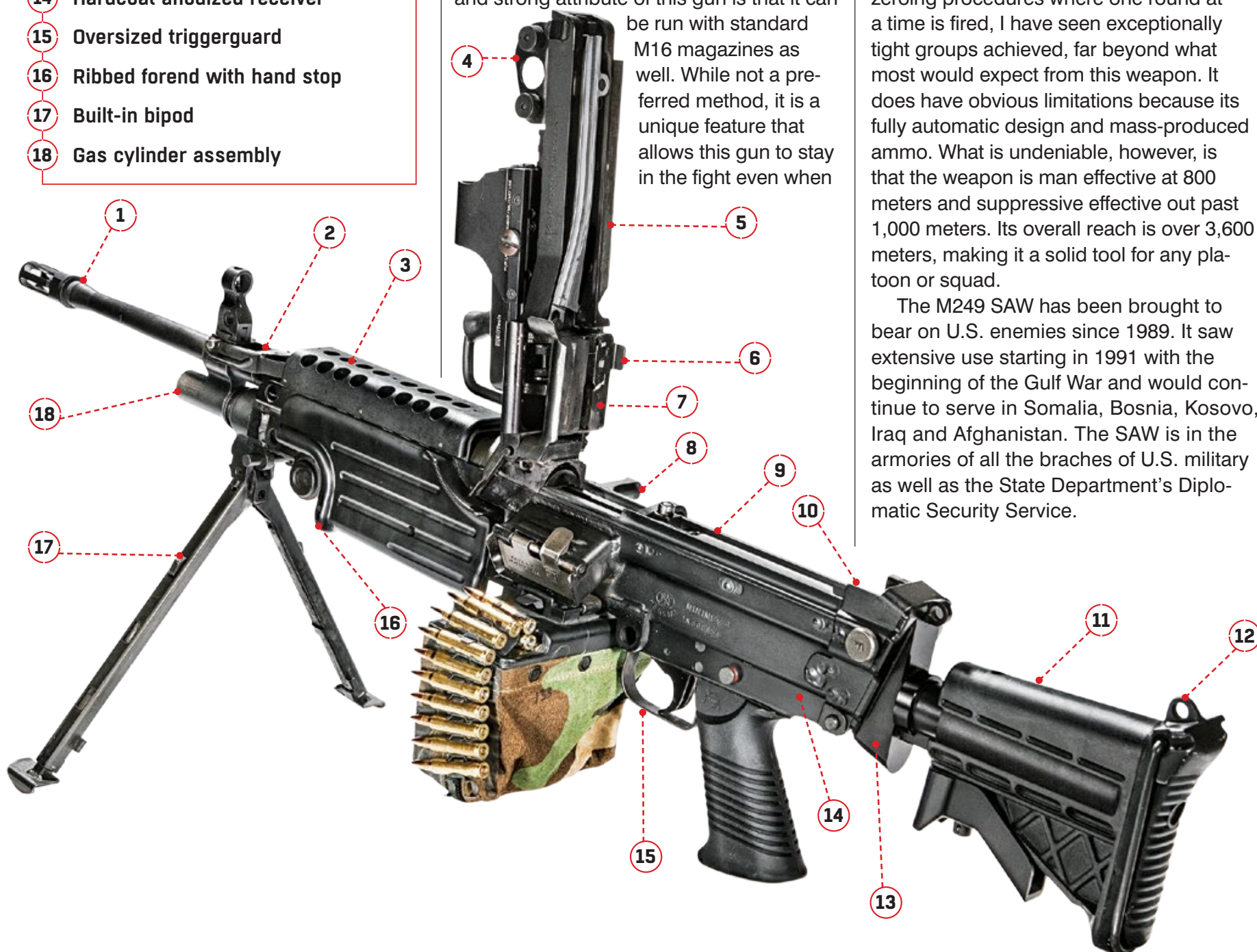
linked ammo has been depleted.

The weapon fires from an open bolt and has a cyclic rate of 750 to 1,000 rounds per minute depending on the gas setting. Because of the high rate of fire, the SAW was designed with a heavy 1-in-7-inch-twist barrel that could be changed out quickly. With a short pull of a lever at the base of the barrel, it releases and comes out. Then you slide a fresh barrel into place, and the gun is up and ready to roll once again.

While the gun comes with a hooded front post sight and a peephole rear aperture sight, most SAWs utilizes optics to increase their effectiveness. The design and weight allows it to be shoulder fired, but it is most easily run with the bipod or mounted in a vehicle.

The original design requirements for the SAW stated that the weapon must have an effective range of at least 800 yards. The question then has always been, "What is effective?" In my experience, the SAW is surprisingly accurate and is close to its cousin, the M16, or other 5.56mm rifles. In zeroing procedures where one round at a time is fired, I have seen exceptionally tight groups achieved, far beyond what most would expect from this weapon. It does have obvious limitations because its fully automatic design and mass-produced ammo. What is undeniable, however, is that the weapon is man effective at 800 meters and suppressive effective out past 1,000 meters. Its overall reach is over 3,600 meters, making it a solid tool for any platoon or squad.

The M249 SAW has been brought to bear on U.S. enemies since 1989. It saw extensive use starting in 1991 with the beginning of the Gulf War and would continue to serve in Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan. The SAW is in the armories of all the branches of U.S. military as well as the State Department's Diplomatic Security Service.





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# THE SEMI-AUTO SAW IS BORN

**T**he M249 SAW has earned its place in the hearts and minds of many soldiers, but what if you could own your very own SAW? At the 2015 NRA Annual Meeting & Exhibits, the folks at FNH USA debuted the new FN M249S, where the “S” designates its semi-automatic-only operation. It’s an exciting development to say the least, even without the full-auto switch. The M249S feeds via magazine or belt and, according to FNH USA, the components are

almost entirely identical to that of the U.S. military’s battle-proven version. It comes with a hefty \$5,000+ price tag, but you’ll probably save some money on ammo because it’s a semi-auto.

In addition to the M249S offering, FNH USA also announced the coming of its FN

15 Military Collector’s Series M16. FNH USA President Mark Cherpes is as pumped up about the new offerings as most military hardware buffs are. In a press release, Cherpes said, “FNH USA has a unique history of commercializing and releasing to U.S. firearms buyers products that were originally developed for military or tactical applica-

tions. We are proud to continue that tradition with the introduction of the FN 15 Military Collector’s Series and the semi-auto FN M249S.”

Look for full wringouts of these new guns based on old classics in a future issue of *Tactical Weapons*, and catch live-fire video at [tactical-life.com](http://tactical-life.com).



## SPEC-OPS M249s

The M249 SAW has been the base for a number of variants. This is a tribute to the solid bones found in the SAW. The military has some common SAW variants, including the M249 Paratrooper, which was modified to better serve airborne troops. It has a shorter barrel and collapsible buttstock.

Another version, the M249 Special Purpose Weapon (SPW), is the product of USSOCOM’s desire for a lighter configuration. The carry handle, magazine insertion well and mounting lugs have all been removed to cut weight. Additionally, the weapon has been fitted with a Picatinny rail on the feed cover and foregrip.

The Mk46 Mod 0 version of the M249—the creation of U.S. Naval Special Warfare Command—is very similar to the M249 SPW design, but the Mk46 has different Picatinny rails and has a traditional fixed buttstock. The Mk46 also has the ability to use a variety of barrels, including a lighter SPW barrel or a heavier, fluted design.

# It's go time



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There is even a version of the M249 SAW chambered in 7.62mm NATO. This version is designated the Mk48 and is used primarily by USSOCOM. This latest version of the SAW, however, would be an omen for its overall future.

## LEGENDARY FIREPOWER

I had the privilege of having a long discussion about the SAW with a retired Marine. He spent most of his 20 years in the USMC in a Recon battalion, and eventually became a Recon instructor. He carried the SAW on multiple occasions, including in Somalia and Iraq. He thought that the SAW was “an outstanding force multiplier and one of the best ‘break-contact’ weapons in the Recon community by far.” He went on to share that the only real downside of the weapon is weight. “If


## SPEC BOX

### M249 SAW

<b>CALIBER:</b>	5.56mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	20.5 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	40.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	17 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Synthetic
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Hooded front, aperture rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	Open bolt
<b>FINISH:</b>	Hardcoat anodized
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	Belt fed or 200-round drum
<b>RATE OF FIRE:</b>	775 rpm

you were the poor soul who was carrying this on a long-range reconnaissance mission, you better have a strong will and be no stranger to the gym.” This echoes the thoughts shared by anyone who has carried the SAW. While lighter than its brother, the M60, it still has the ability to test your stamina. Overall, however, he gave the SAW two thumbs up.

While respected and feared, the unfortunate fact is that the M249 SAW is getting old. The Army has started an intensive program to refurbish the SAW to get every last bit out of this old warhorse. However, replacement weapons are already being tested. The SAW will still be around, but the evolution of weapons waits for no one. Forty-six years after pen was put to paper, giving birth to the concept, the SAW has become an icon of the American arsenal. Recognized around the world for its effectiveness, the M249 SAW will remain a legend in the history of American firepower.

For more information, visit [fnhusa.com](http://fnhusa.com) or call 703-288-3500. 

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**LAR-300 BLACKOUT QUICK SPECS:**

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**PERFORMANCE TUNED.**



Jorge Amelle Photo

Billed as the lightest, most reliable and technically advanced .308, DPMS's GII family of big bores includes the AP4, Recon, SASS (shown with a Harris bipod and an EOTech HWS and 3X magnifier), Hunter, Bull and MOE.

## DPMS GII RECON

DPMS' GII rifles are designed to be modern evolutions of the AR. The guns feature forged uppers and lower receivers, a new extractor, dual ejectors, a steel feed ramp and an enlarged ejection port to enhance reliability. The Recon model has a two-stage trigger, a free-floating handguard and a 16-inch barrel with an AAC Blackout flash suppressor. (dpmsinc.com; 800-578-3767)

### SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	38 inches
WEIGHT:	8.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	Magpul MBUS
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	\$1,759



Bushmaster's MOE 308 Enhanced Optics Ready Carbine (ORC) features a long Picatinny top rail for mounting sights and optics as well as Magpul MOE furniture for better handling.





# LONG & STRONG

## BEYOND THE 5.56

▶▶▶▶ Stack the odds in your favor with a larger-caliber rifle. Sure, the 5.56mm NATO might be king for most operations, but having something with a bit more energy is like holding that lucky ace.

The .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO is a popular action card in this game, but the deck includes other choices as well. The 300 Blackout and .458 SOCOM are another pair of winners. Here are some of the best bets when it comes to big-bore AR-platform rifles on the market today.

**BOOST YOUR LONG-RANGE ARSENAL WITH THESE 20-PLUS 7.62MM, .458 SOCOM AND 300 BLK ARs!**


**BY RICHARD JOHNSON**

Photos Courtesy of Manufacturers

### SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	34 inches
WEIGHT:	9 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	\$1,599

### BUSHMASTER MOE 308 ENHANCED ORC

 The MOE 308 Enhanced Optics Ready Carbine (ORC) from Bushmaster combines an inexpensive price with the company's reputation to deliver a gun that will appeal to many shooters. This rifle comes with a threaded, 16-inch, chrome-lined barrel and a two-stage trigger. A Magpul MOE stock and grip come standard, while the free-floating handguard is made by Troy Industries. (bushmaster.com; 800-883-6229)





ADAMS ARMS TACTICAL EVO

Adams Arms is a leader in the short-stroke-piston AR market, and the Tactical EVO in 300 Blackout is a perfect example of the company’s gear. From the forged upper and lower to the barrel’s Melonite finish, these guns are built for durability. Adams Arms equips the Tactical EVO with a Magpul stock and grip, a VDI Jet Comp muzzle device and a Samson free-floating handguard. (adamsarms.net)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	300 BLK
BARREL:	14.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	32 inches
WEIGHT:	7.23 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,477



ADVANCED ARMAMENT CORPORATION MPW

For a lightweight .30-caliber rifle, it is tough to beat the MPW from Advanced Armament Corporation (AAC). The 300 Blackout MPW comes in several configurations, including SBRs with 9- and 12.5-inch barrels. Features include a Blackout flash suppressor, a free-floating handguard and a nickel-boron-coated bolt carrier group. (advanced-armament.com; 770-925-9988)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	300 BLK
BARREL:	9, 12.5 or 16 inches
OA LENGTH:	26.5 inches (9-inch barrel)
WEIGHT:	5.2 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul CTR
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1
MSRP:	\$1,600



AERO PRECISION M5E1

Built from the ground up for strength and reliability, the M5E1 from Aero Precision starts with custom forged 7075-T6 aluminum receivers that are highly regarded in the industry. Aero Precision uses high-end barrels made of 4150 chrome-moly steel that are QPQ black nitride treated for long life. The KeyMod handguard is exceptionally strong and rigid, yet lightweight and free-floating. The rifles have been designed to use many standard AR-15 parts. (aeroprecisionusa.com; 253-272-8188)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	20 inches
OA LENGTH:	40.5 inches
WEIGHT:	10.25 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul PRS
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Hardcoat anodized black
CAPACITY:	No magazine included
MSRP:	\$1,749



ARMALITE AR-10 TACTICAL

Armalite is a name often associated with the AR platform (AR is short for “Armalite Rifle,” after all), and the new AR-10 Tactical, with its 18-inch barrel, is more than worthy of bearing that name. This rifle sports a number of features including a two-stage, precision trigger, an ambidextrous safety lever, a Raptor ambidextrous charging handle and a 15-inch KeyMod handguard. Magpul supplies the stock, pistol grip and folding sights. (armalite.com; 800-336-0184)

SPEC BOX

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	18 inches
OA LENGTH:	37.5-41.5 inches
WEIGHT:	8.75 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul STR
SIGHTS:	Magpul MBUS
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	25+1
MSRP:	\$1,999



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## BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE PG13

Few companies make a standard rifle that has a more custom look than the Black Rain Ordnance PG13 chambered in 7.62mm NATO. Featuring a silver skull anodized finish and a spiral-fluted barrel, the PG13 really stands out when delivering the goods. This rifle is more than a pretty face. With a nickel-boron-coated bolt carrier group and a proven direct impingement system, the PG13 will run reliably in virtually any environment. ([blackrainordnance.com](http://blackrainordnance.com); 888-836-2620)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	18 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	36.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	9.5 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Magpul UBR
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Silver skulls anodizing
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$3,049

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16.1 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	34.24-37.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8.4 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Flip-up front and rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,999

## COLT LE901-16SE

Modularity is one of the key features to the Colt LE901-16SE. With a simple conversion kit, this .308/7.62mm rifle can utilize any Colt 5.56mm NATO upper in mere seconds. As it ships, the gun has ambidextrous controls, an adjustable stock and folding sights. The LE901-16SE has a 16.1-inch, heavy barrel and a handguard that can be customized with included rails. ([colt.com](http://colt.com); 800-962-2658)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	300 BLK
<b>BARREL:</b>	10.3 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	31.5-34.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	7.56 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	30+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,899

## DANIEL DEFENSE DDM4ISR 300

The integral suppressor on the DDM4ISR 300 may make this gun the ideal tool for an entry team using the 300 Blackout cartridge. The suppressor protects the hearing of the team members while still keeping the overall length to that of a standard 16-inch-barreled AR-type rifle. Daniel Defense's stock and pistol grip are proprietary designs aimed at comfort and reliability. ([danieldefense.com](http://danieldefense.com); 866-554-4867)



## DIAMONDBACK DB15B300

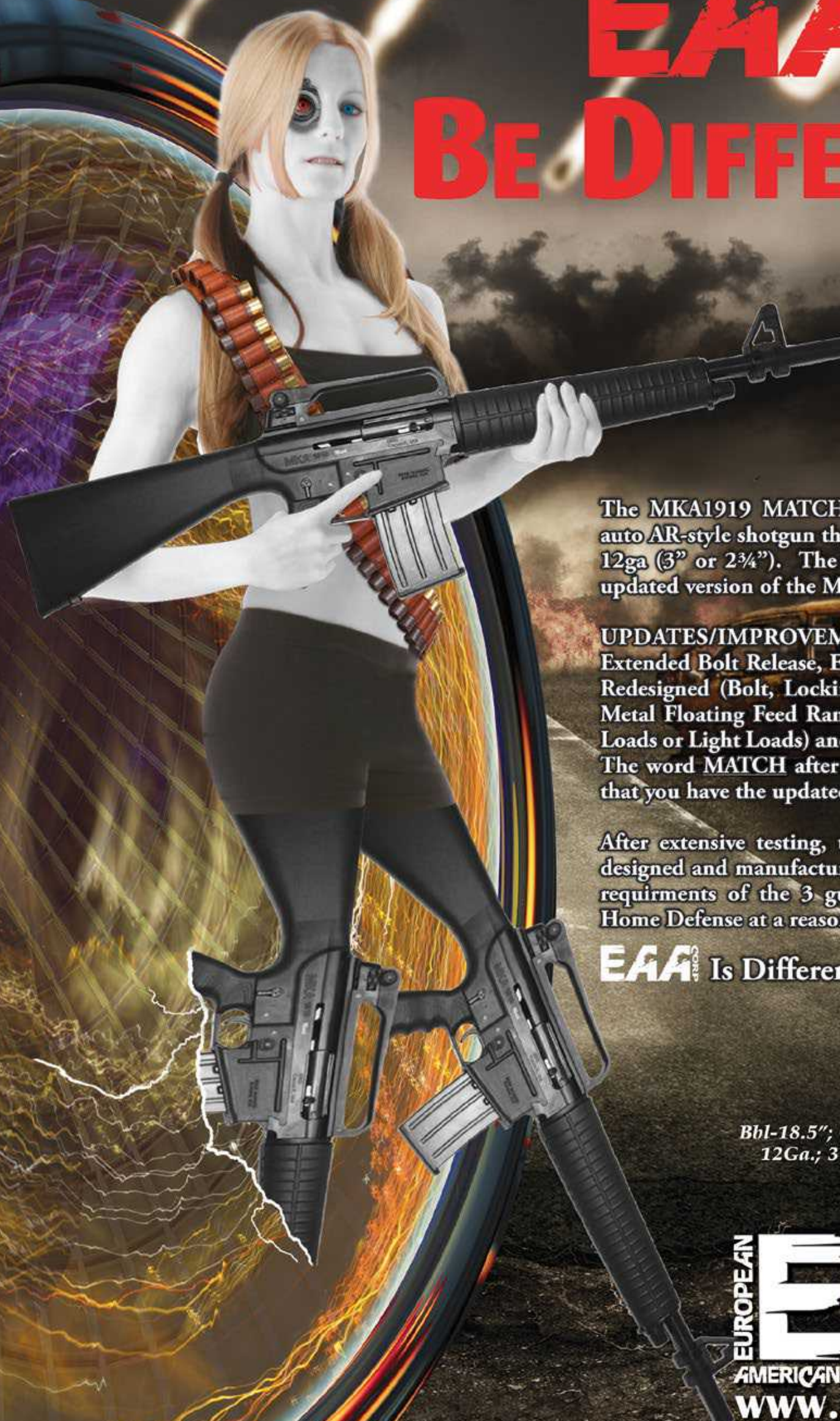
Chambered for the increasingly popular 300 Blackout, the Diamondback DB15B300 rifle uses forged upper and lower receivers for long-term durability. The rifle has a 16-inch, 4140 steel barrel with a 1-in-9-inch twist rate and is topped with an A2-type flash suppressor. The handguard is a specially modified quad-rail developed by Diamondback, and it's paired with an ATI Strikeforce adjustable stock for maximum shooter control. ([diamondbackfirearms.com](http://diamondbackfirearms.com); 877-997-6774)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	300 BLK
<b>BARREL:</b>	16 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	32.5-36.25 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	6.87 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	ATI Strikeforce
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	30+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,140



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The MKA1919 MATCH is a magazine-fed, semi-auto AR-style shotgun that feeds and functions with 12ga (3" or 2¾"). The MKA1919 MATCH is the updated version of the MKA1919.

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*MKA 1919 Match  
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**SKU: 700000**

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*Always abide by all local & federal laws concerning firearms ownership, handling, storage & safety.*





SPEC BOX

FN SCAR 17S

With military and law enforcement units around the world using the multiple SCAR 17 variants, there is no doubt that this gun performs well under stress. The SCAR 17S uses a short-stroke piston system for clean, reliable running. The quick-change barrel system allows a shooter to go from a standard length to CQC with minimal shift in the point of impact. The controls are ambidextrous, and the stock folds for carrying in tight spaces. (fnhusa.com; 703-288-3500)

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	28.5-38.5 inches
WEIGHT:	8 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible, folding
SIGHTS:	Folding front and rear
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black or Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	\$3,349



SPEC BOX

HECKLER & KOCH MR762A1

With roots in the world-class HK417 assault rifle, the MR762A1 is a semi-automatic rifle that retains all of the “to hell and back” reliability that Heckler & Koch is known for. This gun uses a gas piston operating system to keep the gun running in even the harshest conditions. The standard quad-rail handguard can be removed and replaced with simple tools, and the controls are ambidextrous. (hk-usa.com; 706-568-1906)

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16.6 inches
OA LENGTH:	35.94-39.1 inches
WEIGHT:	9.84 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Collapsible
SIGHTS:	Troy front and rear
ACTION:	Piston-operated semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	\$3,999



SPEC BOX

LMT SHARPSHOOTER

Designed as a world-class rifle for a designated marksman, the Lewis Machine & Tool (LMT) LM308SS Sharpshooter Rifle Weapon System is the American version of the acclaimed L129A1 system fielded by the United Kingdom. This rifle comes with everything a marksman will need including eight magazines, an Otis cleaning kit and a Pelican hard case. (lmtdefense.com; 309-787-7151)

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	35.5-39 inches
WEIGHT:	9.97 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	SOPMOD
SIGHTS:	Folding front and rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black, Flat Dark Earth
CAPACITY:	20+1
MSRP:	\$5,197



SPEC BOX

MOSSBERG MVP PATROL

Using a patent-pending design, the MVP Patrol in 7.62mm NATO is a Mossberg bolt-action rifle that is fed by M1A/SR-25 magazines. These very popular guns have a 16.25-inch, medium bull barrel that is threaded and capped with an A2-style flash suppressor. Rifle sights are standard on the gun, as is the Picatinny rail for adding precision glass. (mossberg.com; 203-230-5300)

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16.25 inches
OA LENGTH:	37.5 inches
WEIGHT:	7.5 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Synthetic
SIGHTS:	Fiber-optic front, blade rear
ACTION:	Bolt
FINISH:	Matte blue
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	\$748





**SPEC BOX**

## PATRIOT ORDNANCE FACTORY P308

Incredibly durable and reliable, the Patriot Ordnance P308 sets a high bar for .30-caliber rifles. The P308 rifle uses a dual extraction system that increases the reliability of the system and increases the extractor life by up to five times. Also enhancing reliability is the nickel-boron-coated bolt carrier group. These guns have ambidextrous controls, including the bolt catch, bolt release and safety. ([pof-usa.com](http://pof-usa.com); 623-561-9572)

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	14.5, 16.5 or 20 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	34-39.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8.1-8.5 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Magpul CTR, w/rubber buttpad
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Piston-operated semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Black, NP3, burnt bronze, tungsten, OD
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,760



**SPEC BOX**

## ROCK RIVER ARMS LAR-458 X-1

For special needs, the Rock River Arms LAR-458 X-1 rifle is chambered in .458 SOCOM. Although equipped with a muzzle brake, a suppressor can be added to take full advantage of subsonic ammo loaded with 500-grain bullets. A fluted, 18-inch barrel, forged upper and lower receivers, a free-floated handguard and a Hogue pistol grip come standard. Adjustable and fixed stocks are available on the X-1. ([rockriverarms.com](http://rockriverarms.com); 866-980-7625) —Continued on page 122

<b>CALIBER:</b>	.458 SOCOM
<b>BARREL:</b>	18 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	37 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8.6 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Fixed or collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Black or tan
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	7+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,595

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Director of Product Development



**DEAD AIR**  
armament





# BUILD YOUR OWN SIX8

**LWRC's** matched receiver set forms the solid foundation for a 6.8 SPC carbine.

BY DAVID BAHDE

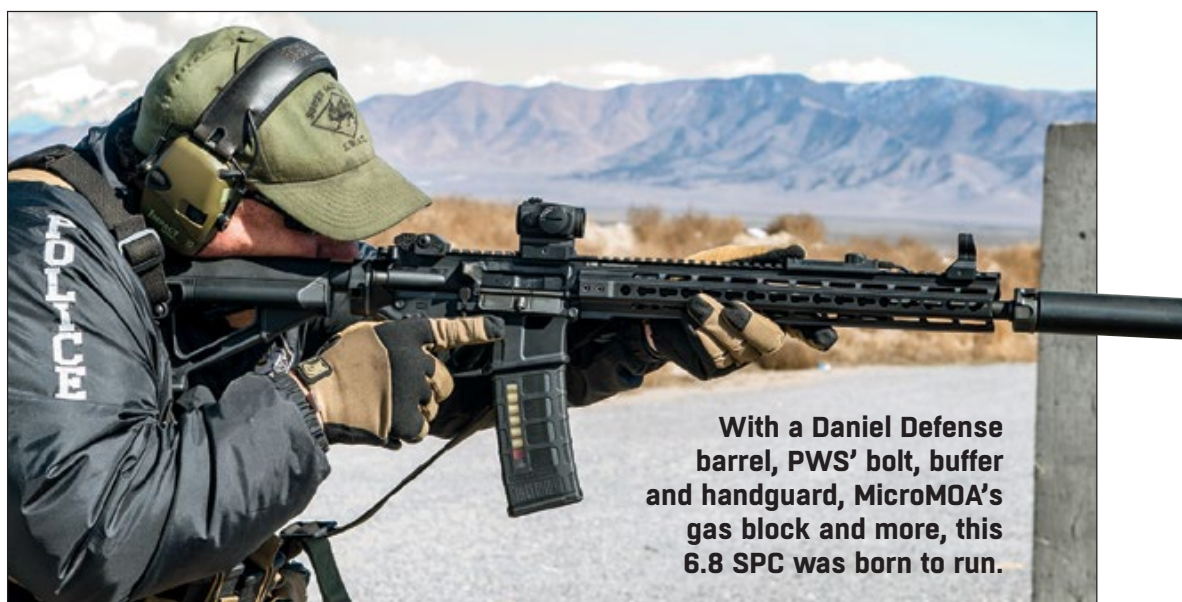
**A** POLICE OFFICER'S workspace is short when compared to a soldier's, making any argument about the overall ineffectiveness of the 5.56mm NATO cartridge specious to me. It works fine for most. It is convenient, light on recoil and gets the job done. But there are some better alternatives. Rural law enforcement agencies, for example, may need something bigger and faster with more energy on target at longer ranges. Sure, the .308/7.62mm works, but it creates other issues, like cost, overpenetration, weight, perception and reliability in an AR. The 300 BLK is promising, but current ammunition costs are just too high. Cost, coupled with a lack of availability, turned my attention to the 6.8 SPC, and LWRC International provided the perfect opportunity for me to get back into this excellent chambering.

## SPECIAL PURPOSES

Using the 6.8 SPC in a standard AR-platform rifle presents a couple issues. Converting from a 5.56mm to the 6.8 SPC requires a bolt and magazine change. Matching the gas tube and barrel length is a bit more critical. Feeding could also be problematic, with longer loads limiting your choices when reliability is paramount. Magazines for the 6.8 SPC have always been the Achilles' heel; they need to be steel to work, making them heavy, costly and



The heart of this custom build was LWRC's forged and "double coined" Six8 receiver set. The matched upper and lower receivers are designed to utilize affordable polymer Magpul PMAGs and ambidextrous controls.



With a Daniel Defense barrel, PWS' bolt, buffer and handguard, MicroMOA's gas block and more, this 6.8 SPC was born to run.

sometimes limited in terms of capacity. Polymer magazines have yet to prove viable, until now.

LWRC International, a longtime supporter of the 6.8 SPC, decided to start

over and address these issues, resulting in its line of Six8 rifles. The company collaborated with Magpul from the start, and the latter built a PMAG around the cartridge. Federal also helped by



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developing ammunition to work with the system that is less costly, accurate and suitable for duty use. The retail pricing on the magazines is about half that of the steel versions—definitely a boon these days.

LWRC built one of its proven lower receivers around this magazine and cartridge. The feeding angles, bolt timing and other issues were addressed. Adding the company's piston-driven upper resulted in one of the most reliable 6.8 SPC rifles available. Standard uppers would not work, limiting you to a complete gun—at least until recently, that is.

LWRC International is now offering matched upper and lower receiver sets in the Six8 platform, allowing you to build a direct-impingement gun. Many want a simple direct-impingement gun that also features the advantages of the Six8 design, and this is just the ticket.

## SPEC BOX

### LWRC CUSTOM SIX8

**CALIBER:** 6.8 SPC

**BARREL:** 16 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 36.5 inches

**WEIGHT:** 8 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** Magpul STR

**SIGHTS:** HK front, flip-up rear

**ACTION:** Direct impingement semi-auto

**FINISH:** Matte black

**CAPACITY:** 30+1

**MSRP:** N/A

## THE PLAYERS

Having tested dozens of ARs over the years, a few companies always seem to excel when it comes to simplicity, reliability and usability in a stock build. There are

a few, but two that have worked well for me have been Primary Weapons Systems (PWS) and Daniel Defense. Their off-the-shelf rifles worked no matter what I did to them, prompting me to use their parts to finish the build. I used a Daniel Defense cold-hammer-forged barrel and a matching bolt and PWS' buffer tube, bolt carrier and a 15-inch handguard.

For the gas system, I installed a Micro-MOA "Govnah" gas block, which comes with interchangeable plates to control the gas flow. Two- and three-hole plates are available, and they can be moved without tools. Pre-drilled plates are available for some calibers, or you can drill your own. I have one installed on my competition rifle that works well. Given the huge range of ammunition for the 6.8 SPC, I used a three-position plate to customize the gun for suppressed fire.



1. The author added BAD-EPS (Enhanced Pin Set) from Battle Arms Development.
2. A tight barrel-to-receiver fit ensures solid accuracy downrange.
3. Primary Weapons Systems offers a tool just for properly tightening the barrel nut.
4. The author installed a mid-length gas system optimized for 16-inch barrels.
5. To tune the Govnah, first anchor its adjustment plate in a vise.
6. Drilling holes in the Govnah's plate will give you options to adjust the gas system.
7. A hole in the top of the Govnah gas block will help you line up the plate properly.
8. Once in place, you can adjust the Govnah to utilize different gas port sizes.

**“This was one of the smoothest AR builds I’ve ever completed. LWRCI’s receiver set was tight, and I experienced no installation problems.”**



LWRC's Six8 lower receiver comes the company's ambidextrous magazine and bolt release, dust cover, takedown pins and a direct-impingement gas tube guide. Ernie Bray at Red Creek Tactical provided a set of Battle Arms Development (BAD) enhanced pushpins (BAD-EPS). Geissele's SSA trigger and Troy Industries' ambidextrous safety finished out the internals. Magpul's STR stock covered the PWS one-piece buffer tube. A BCM Gunfighter pistol grip and Magpul triggerguard completed the lower. Finally, to help mitigate recoil, I added Sprinco's Tactical Blue Spring and a Spike's Tactical T2 buffer.

### DUTY-READY BUILD

Putting an AR together is anything but rocket science. Keep it simple and use quality parts, and things will go together pretty easily. This is one of the things that make this platform so popular. It may be the most user-friendly rifle ever developed. Building this rifle was no different, especially when starting with the LWRC matched set. These receivers are "double coined" forgings, providing CNC detailing with all the strength of a forged receiver. The attention to detail on this set is excellent.

Daniel Defense makes some of the best duty-ready barrels on the market. Cold-hammer forged, they are accurate, easy to clean and consistent. This barrel uses a 1-in-11-inch twist rate and a 6.8 SPC II chamber. The barrel also has 5/8x24 threading and is built for a mid-length gas system with the company's S2W (Strength To Weight) profile. It fit perfectly in the LWRC upper receiver.

The PWS handguard is designed for DI guns. Measuring 15 inches long, it uses the KeyMod system for attaching accessories. The free-floating handguard cradles the gas tube and a barrel nut threads inside it, attaching the barrel. Once in place, it's easy to remove the handguard as needed. The matching bolt was placed in the PWS DI carrier. Machined from tool steel, these carriers are incredibly strong. They're also coated in QPQ for smooth operation. It all came together and worked perfectly and smoothly in the upper receiver.

It's critical to properly fit the gas block. It must be lined up perfectly for all three holes to work. There is a plug on top of the block that lines up with the porthole. Start by drilling the left-side hole on your plate (muzzle forward) to match the barrel porthole (0.086 inches in this case). Put the plate in the block, install the block on the barrel and use the matching-numbered

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drill bit to line them up. Tighten the gas block and mark it, or use feeler gauges to measure any gap between it and the block.

Attaching the PWS buffer tube took some work. This tube uses an extended lip to cover the plunger and spring. The LWRC receiver is fractionally longer and is cut so that there is a ledge just past the plunger-tube hole. Careful fitting of the lip allowed the tube to slide in place. Installing the BAD takedown pins was simple; a magnet holds each pin in place. Geissele's trigger dropped into place, and the Troy Industries safety is excellent. Instead of screws, the levers snap into place—very quick and solid with nothing to come loose.

LWRC equips this lower with a screw, accessed from under the grip, which allows you to tighten the fit between the upper and lower. I tightened it and installed the BCM grip. Next I installed the buffer and spring. Once all together, I tested the rifle's tolerances and smoothness, and cycled it using snap caps. LWRC's ambidextrous charging handle is great but a little tight—it broke in nicely after live-fire testing.

## ROUNDS DOWNRANGE

Using the initial full-port option on the gas block, I tested the rifle with a variety of 6.8 SPC ammunition, most of it from Silver State Armory. I tested loads ranging from 85-grain Nosler E-Tips to 115-grain OTMs, as well as some of Federal's new 90-grain Gold Dot rounds and Hornady's 110-grain V-MAX and BTHP ammo. All of it worked well on this open setting with the exception of the 85-grain E-Tips. The rifle ran well but the bolt would not lock back. Everything else was reliable and ejected between 3 and 4 o'clock. In fact, this LWRC receiver set is a game-changer for the caliber. Short of a couple custom builds, this is the most reliable 6.8 SPC DI gun I've ever tested, and the Magpul magazines are excellent.

For the second range session, I removed the gas plate and installed one with the other two holes pre-drilled at 0.07 inches. I placed the plate in my trailer hitch vise and used a drill to slowly increase the port size until, when installed, the bolt locked back regularly with every round and ejected properly. The center hole ended up at 0.076 inches, reliably firing everything with my SureFire SOCOM762-MINI suppressor attached. The last hole was tuned specifically for use with the 115-grain TAC Loads from Silver State (unsuppressed). Multi-gun matches are a consideration, so this was set up just for that purpose. I tested the rifle for reliability



**1. The PWS handguard made it easy to add a SureFire Scout light. 2. Aimpoint's Micro T-1 sight is fast on target. 3. The author added a flip-up rear sight that co-witnessed with the Aimpoint sight. 4. A Troy Industries ambidextrous safety was installed. 5. This HK front sight has large protective wings.**

## PERFORMANCE LWRCI CUSTOM SIX8

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal 90 Gold Dot	2,835	0.58
Hornady 110 BTHP	2,610	0.75
Hornady 110 V-MAX	2,600	1.00
Silver State Armory 85 E-Tip	2,950	0.95
Silver State Armory 90 TNT	2,987	0.90
Silver State Armory 115 OTM	2,590	0.86

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

on all three settings with and without the suppressor. My final testing resulted in a 0.086-inch setting for wide open, a 0.076-inch setting for suppressed and a 0.081-inch setting for the 115-grain OTM ammo. All rounds ejected perfectly at 3 to 4 o'clock and were 100-percent reliable. The recoil was also reduced for a very smooth range session.

My last range session consisted of accuracy testing and some drills. I used Bushnell's Elite Tactical 1-6.5x24mm SMRS scope for the accuracy testing

and chronographing. All of the testing was done with the suppressor in place. Groups at 100 yards were impressive, with the Federal 90-grain Gold Dot ammo just short of astounding. In fact, it produced a cloverleaf group measuring just a tad over 0.5 inches. Everything else shot at or around an inch. Moving to an Aimpoint T-1 and an HK fixed front sight, I performed a number of drills, and the rifle ran without a single issue.

## SMOOTH OPERATOR

This was one of the smoothest AR builds I've ever completed. LWRC's receiver set was tight, and I experienced no installation problems. Coupled with the Daniel Defense barrel and PMAGs, it was reliable, accurate and well balanced. I would encourage anyone looking to build their own 6.8 SPC AR to give this setup a close look.

MicroMOA's gas block allows for incredible versatility in a DI gun. Once set up, you just push the plate back and forth. If you want to alter it, remove the plate, drill it and replace it, or simply have a couple of plates for various needs. It was perfect for this build, providing versatility with a wide range of ammunition. It is solid and stayed in place throughout the testing.

I'm going to use this rifle at police department trainings as well as a couple of schools, and maybe even a competition or two. One thing is for sure: The LWRC matched receiver set is well built with solid attention to detail. It allows you to get the most from this chambering. **TW**

## INFO BOX

**AIMPOINT**  
aimpoint.com; 877-246-7646

**DANIEL DEFENSE**  
danieldefense.com; 866-554-4867

**LWRC INTERNATIONAL**  
lwrci.com; 410-901-1348

**MICROMOA**  
micromoa.com; 407-900-9591

**PRIMARY WEAPONS SYSTEMS**  
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I've watched rifles make a dramatic transition over the past three decades. I remember the time vividly when companies like Butler Creek started offering injection-molded aftermarket stocks, and it wasn't very long before manufacturers started selling their rifles with plastic handles. After weighing the benefits of durability, rigidity and shot-to-shot consistency, shooters were willing to give up the beauty of a wood-stocked rifle for utility.

Now don't get the idea that I'm proposing that sporting rifles were the origin of synthetic rifle stocks. As far back as the 1950s, synthetics started showing up on military weapons. For example, the handguard of the M14 was synthetic. As plastic-molding technology improved, rifles like Armalite's M16 launched the era of "Mattel rifles," and synthetic bolt-action stocks followed shortly thereafter.

Military needs again drove the next generation of rifles. Modularity and ease of repair fostered the metal rifle chassis. When rifle designers took a hard look at the basic century-old Mauser design, they learned that bedding it rigidly to the stock improved accuracy. Pillar bedding took accuracy up a notch. Then pillar bedding in a stable synthetic stock helped even more. Well, if a couple of metal pillars around the action screw holes helped, a solid block of metal would add that much more accuracy-enhancing action stiffness. The evolution continued with rifles such as Accuracy International's cold-weather sniper systems that employed a full-length chassis with plastic "skins" attached to the sides to protect the shooter while holding a rifle that may be so cold that it would stick to exposed skin.

Accuracy International could have cornered the aluminum alloy rifle chassis market, but the company has secured so





Whether it's a Tier 1 (shown with a 3.5-10x40mm Leupold Mark 4 scope) or a Tier 3 (shown with a Trijicon 5-20x50mm AccuPoint scope), Drake Associates' Hunter Stalker lightweight chassis system rifles can take your accuracy and performance to the next level.



# DRAKE 7.62



# STALKERS

many military contracts that it doesn't have the manufacturing heft to adequately supply the American firearms market. So few actually get imported that some of Accuracy International's well-touted models are about as scarce as hen's teeth. This great idea, but poor execution, made it profitable for other manufacturers to jump into the chassis business. One of those companies that has stepped up is Drake Associates, and its most recent Hunter Stalker models bring the military-borne chassis systems full circle into the hunting and sporting world.

#### **DRAKE'S TAKE**

Drake Associates, Inc., is a business development corporation with extensive experience in firearms business operations, management, sales and marketing. For more than 20 years, the company has specialized in developing U.S. and Canadian market opportunities for European industrial corporations

## **Going long and sub-MOA**

## **with Drake's classy**

## **Tier 1 and Tier 3 lightweight**

## **sniper chassis!**

**BY JAY LANGSTON • OLEG VOLK PHOTOS**





1. The author's Tier I Hunter Stalker rifle came equipped with a familiar Remington 700 action featuring a Super Match .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO chamber.
2. The Hunter Stalker chassis utilizes an AR-style receiver extension, making it easy to add stocks like the FAB GL-Shock-CP.
3. Side rails make it easy to add accessories, while the long top rail is perfect for mounting night vision.
4. The Tier 1's fluted, 16.25-inch barrel sports 5/8x24 threading and comes capped with a three-port muzzle brake.

involved in military, law enforcement and civilian programs. Those activities have included distributor operations, sales representation, market segment development, supply chain management and more.

"We maximize the use of market research and personal knowledge of trends and needs to identify and rapidly expand into niche market opportunities," the company's president, Chris Drake, said. "This approach has allowed Drake Associates to bring the products of our European clients to market in a rapid and cost-effective manner.

"We have specialized in ammunition and weapon systems from the supply of raw material, production machinery, sub-assemblies, components, spare parts and finished goods and systems." To add some spice to a successful firearms business recipe, Chris Drake is an active-duty New York police officer and SWAT sniper.

Combining his practical law enforcement and weapons training, Drake has played a key role in improving modular rifle chassis systems that have been adopted

**“Compact, light-weight sniper systems built on stable chassis are ideal in urban tactical situations.”**

## SPEC BOX

### DRAKE TIER 1 HUNTER STALKER

CALIBER:	7.62mm NATO
BARREL:	16.25 inches
OA LENGTH:	35.88 inches
WEIGHT:	9.3 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	FAB Defense GL-Shock-CP
SIGHTS:	None
ACTION:	Bolt
FINISH:	Cerakote
CAPACITY:	10+1
MSRP:	\$3,336 (as tested)

recently by U.S. military forces.

Building on that experience, Drake designed the Hunter Stalker LWSS (Light Weight Sniper System) universal chassis to fit a Remington Model 700 short action.

## LIGHTWEIGHT SNIPER

I've built a few custom chassis-style rifles and have tested all of USSOCOM's Precision Sniper Rifle contenders from several major manufacturers. The earliest designs are still quite functional, but their feel can be rather club-like in comparison to the latest all-metal chassis systems. Drake's Tier 1 Hunter Stalker LWSS is a minimalist in comparison to earlier chassis systems. This rifle's slim forend not only reduces its overall weight, but it also feels good in your hands. Another major feature of the Drake Hunter Stalker is that it is fitted with a mil-spec receiver extension to attach a FAB Defense GL-Shock-CP buttstock. This stock is adjustable for both length of pull and comb height.

Another mil-spec dimension of the chassis is that it can utilize an AR-style





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**“I was able to see the impact—owing to the highly controllable nature of the rifle—and put the next round on target.”**

pistol grip, and my test rifle was fitted with an Ergo grip with a palm swell. The standard model comes fitted with a Hogue pistol grip and a Remington factory X-Mark Pro trigger. My test rifle was fitted with an upgraded Timney trigger. The magazine well on this rifle is designed for standard AICS magazines, and my test model came with a 10-rounder.

The forend is drilled and tapped at five positions along the bottom, with one of them being a standard sling swivel attachment point to make a Harris-style bipod an easy addition. A Picatinny rail section can also be fitted in its place. The right and left sides of the forend wear 6-inch rail sections for mounting accessories. For mounting optics, the Tier 1 Hunter Stalker is fitted with a matching 20-MOA top rail that is extended to make it night-vision capable. Another

feature that sets the Hunter Stalker chassis apart is that it adapts to either a right- or left-hand action. The non-bolt-handle side wears a filler plug. The chassis and top rail come in a choice of colors: Flat Dark Earth, OD green or black.

The Tier 1 Hunter Stalker rifle I tested was outfitted with a 16.25-inch barrel with a Super Match .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO chamber. One of the features that sets this rifle apart from other rifles I have tested based upon the Remington Model 700 action is its barrel attachment. This Drake rifle incorporates a custom barrel nut and an oversized recoil lug. These two parts reinforce the joint between the barrel and the action to add rigidity, improve accuracy and allow the barrel to be quickly changed for a new one if you shoot this one out. The oversized recoil lug is also installed after



## • DRAKE'S TIER 3 HUNTER STALKER •



*Like the Tier 1 rifle, the Tier 3 Hunter Stalker produced sub-MOA results with several factory loads at 100 yards.*

**I**n addition to the Tier 1 rifle, I tested a Tier 3 Hunter Stalker rifle. The Tier 3 incorporates fewer of the bells and whistles of the Tier 1 for about one-third less cost. Although offered in a right- or left-hand Remington 700 versions with an SPS or Varmint barrel and some light accuracy work, I shot the Savage Model 11 version chambered in .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO. It retains the factory Savage varmint-weight barrel, which Drake enhances with 5/8x24 threading at the muzzle. Additionally, the Tier 3 Hunter Stalker is available in .223 Remington on the

short action, and a long-action version comes chambered in .300 Winchester Magnum, .30-06 or 7mm Remington Magnum. Special orders with a McMillan action allow a step up in power to .338 Lapua Magnum, .300 Norma Magnum or .338 Norma Magnum calibers.

**TIER 3 TESTING:** To test the Tier 3's accuracy, I mounted a Trijicon 5-20x50mm AccuPoint with a mil-dot reticle. Again, I used the Federal American Eagle 168-grain OTM load for sighting in and initial accuracy testing. The best group fired at 100 yards measured 1.33 inches and averaged 2,390 fps. Since Federal's 168-grain Gold Medal Match load performed well in the Tier 1 rifle, I wasn't surprised that it printed the smallest groups in the Tier 3 rifle. The load averaged 2,384 fps and put five rounds into a 0.82-inch cluster.

Hornady's 168-grain Superformance Match load was fast, with an average of 2,520 fps, but not the fastest. Its best group measured 0.98 inches center-to-center. The last load I tested was Australian Outback's 168-grain Sierra MatchKing ammo. This is a blistering load, with an average velocity of 2,560 fps. Its tightest group measured 0.95 inches. In all, this rifle was just as accurate and reliable on the range. It's also a great value for discerning shooters.

### SPEC BOX

#### DRAKE TIER 3 HUNTER STALKER

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16.25 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	35.88 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	9.3 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	FAB Defense GL-Shock-CP
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Bolt
<b>FINISH:</b>	Cerakote
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	10+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,295 (as tested)





PERFORMANCE		
DRAKE TIER 1 HUNTER STALKER		
LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Federal American Eagle 168 OTM	2,386	1.30
Federal 168 Gold Medal Match	2,384	0.37
Federal 175 Gold Medal Match	2,365	0.99
Hornady 168 A-MAX	2,518	0.98
Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.		

the action and barrel have been precisely trued to assure straightness, and the larger lug helps transfer vibration to the chassis to deaden barrel oscillation.

The barrel has single-point-cut 5R rifling in a 1-in-10-inch twist. Fluted along its length to add rigidity and reduce weight, the Cerakote-finished barrel has 5/8x24 threading at the muzzle to attach either a 51T muzzle brake or Drake's three-port removable muzzle brake.

RANGE STALKING

To test the Tier 1 Hunter Stalker's accuracy, I followed my standard protocol of firing five-shot groups at 100 yards, followed by engaging steel targets out

to 750 yards. I mounted a Leupold 3.5-10x40mm Mark 4 scope for the accuracy testing and fired several groups with three factory loads.

The first load used was Federal's American Eagle 168-grain OTM ammo, which clocked 2,386 fps 15 feet from the muzzle. Its smallest 100-yard group measured 1.3 inches. Since this is an economy load, I wasn't too surprised.

The next load was Federal's 168-grain Gold Medal Match. This was the rifle's preferred load, with a 0.37-inch five-shot group. Its average velocity was 2,384 fps. Federal's Gold Medal Match 175-grain load produced a 0.99-inch group. This load's average velocity was 2,365 fps. Finally,

the Hornady 168-grain A-MAX produced a 0.98-inch group with a 2,518-fps velocity.

Stepping out to longer ranges, I engaged a 6-inch steel plate at an increasingly rapid pace through 10 rounds with 100-percent hits. At 500 yards, I took a slower, deliberate pace, putting 10 consecutive rounds on a 6-inch plate after compensating for a 9-mph crosswind. Moving out to 750 yards, reading wind conditions got a little tricky and variable between shots. When I got dialed in, I was able to put a couple of consecutive shots on a 10-inch plate, and then the wind would change again. The best I could do was put two rounds on target if I shot quickly before a wind gust would drift the next round off target. I was able to see the impact—owing to the highly controllable nature of the rifle—and put the next round on target.

Compact, lightweight sniper systems built on stable chassis are ideal in urban tactical situations. In this context, the Tier 1 Hunter Stalker from Drake Associates rises to the top. It will certainly put rounds on target with precision and reliability. For more information, call 631-749-1100 or visit [drakeassociates.us](http://drakeassociates.us).

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# HARD-CORPS WILSON 92



➤ Retired Marine's trusty BERETTA 9MM gets 100% Bullet Proofed for 21st century operators!

BY LEN WALDRON

**Ronald Rimmer** was a gangly 20-year-old in 1983 when he arrived at the yellow footprints familiar to thousands at the Marines Corps Recruit Depot at Parris Island, South Carolina. His six-foot, five-inch

frame made him stick out amongst his classmates, which wasn't necessarily a good thing as a recruit. But like thousands before and since, Rimmer completed


his basic training and went on to become an Air Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO) Marine, serving 15 total years on active duty and in the reserves. Retiring as a gunnery sergeant, Rimmer's career took him to Caribbean, Africa, the Mediterranean and Europe.

Shortly after his entry into the Marine Corps, the decision was made to switch the issued sidearm from the venerated Colt 1911A1 to the Beretta 92F (M9). While the rationale was exhaustively debated across the military, newly minted recruits fight with what they are issued, and so began a career of service between Rimmer and the Beretta 92F. The mythical days of American warriors returning to their civilian life with the actual firearms they carried during their service are over, if they ever existed. But like many professional-minded Marines, Rimmer purchased a Beretta 92FS nearly identical to his USMC-issued pistol more than 20 years ago, for personal protection and to maintain and improve his skills.

Here you can see retired Marine Ronald Rimmer's Beretta 92FS before being upgraded by Wilson Combat. Note the pistol's matte black finish, lanyard loop and black grip panels.

“The first step was to update and refinish the pistol's external surfaces and safety.”





Wilson Combat refinished the entire exterior surface of the Beretta in black Armor-Tuff. The existing front- and backstrap serrations, as well as the mag release button, remained unchanged from the original 92FS design.



Rimmer wears his dress uniform just after passing basic recruit training in 1983. His Marine Corps career would span 15 years and four continents with an ultimate rank of Gunnery Sergeant.



As such, this particular Beretta had been with Rimmer for a long time, and it was no small gesture for him to hand it over to Wilson Combat to change what had become a familiar and trusted companion. “I was apprehensive about sending it off, not to mention not having it, and it potentially coming back changed in a way that made it less than it left. It was like sending a kid off to college,” said Rimmer.

## CLASSIC & MODERN

Like most Marines, Rimmer appreciates tradition and was not inclined to substantially change the overall look of the weapon. In a letter to Bill Wilson, the founder of Wilson Combat, he wrote, “I am guessing the Custom Carry Package for the 92FS would be the best option—but keeping the look of the pistol black, as it was when I carried it in the Fleet, would be my preference.” So the order was sent to keep Rimmer’s Beretta as true to its issued appearance while upgrading or tuning existing parts. This meant keeping the original grips, front- and backstrap serrations, lanyard loop and magazine release button, but many other changes were to come.



“The finish is flawless...It looks like it just came out of the shrink wrap...Just the finest craftsmanship all around. The overall look is sharper and cleaner.”



Wilson Combat replaced the stock polymer guide rod with its own 4140 heat-treated and fluted steel guide rod as well as a 13-pound chrome-silicon recoil spring for smoother shooting.

The Wilson team prepped and dehorned all of the external surfaces for concealed carry and added the company's own G-series safety and decocker.

## SPEC BOX

### CUSTOM WILSON BERETTA 92FS

<b>CALIBER:</b>	9mm
<b>BARREL:</b>	4.9 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	8.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	33.3 ounces (empty)
<b>GRIPS:</b>	Synthetic
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	White-dot front, Battlesight rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	DA/SA
<b>FINISH:</b>	Armor-Tuff
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	15+1, 17+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	N/A

The first step was to update and refinish the pistol's external surfaces and safety. This involved stripping the whole gun and then adding the beveled magazine-well cut and G-series safety conversion. For this conversion, the Wilson Combat team removed the stock safety and added the company's own G-series safety/decocker. This step eliminated the safety lever from the right side of the slide, which can catch while the pistol is carried, and the new left-side lever has a lower profile. The modification also included a new plunger and spring supporting the lever. Next, the Wilson Combat team prepped and dehorned all of the external surfaces for concealed carry and made slightly deeper cuts in the factory serrations.

The pistol was then bagged and sent to have the entire exterior of the pistol finished with Wilson Combat's Armor-Tuff in the original black color. More than a paint, the Armor-Tuff finish comes after a fine media sand blasting of the frame, slide and external metal parts. Unlike the original bluing, Wilson Combat's Armor-Tuff finish is thermally cured to be resistant to water, salt, chemicals and abrasion.

When it returned to the gunsmithing bench, the tuning began. This involved polishing the internal contact surfaces of the parts inside the frame. It also included polishing the hammer and sear as well as checking and, if necessary, replacing the factory springs. Particular attention was given to both the single- and double-action trigger pulls to make certain that they were

The Armor-Tuff coating brought new life to the Beretta. While the updated pistol retained the original white-dot front sight, it is now paired with Wilson's own Battlesight rear unit.





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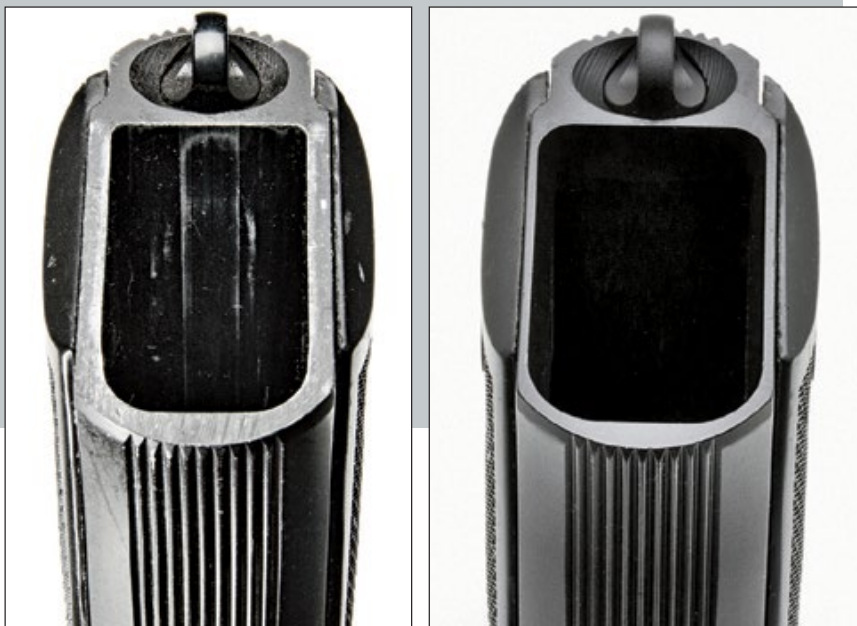
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In addition to refinishing the Beretta's bottom surfaces, Wilson Combat beveled the mouth of the magazine well and smoothed the internal surfaces to make it easier to reload quickly.



both smooth and consistent. The tuned double-action trigger pull typically weighs between 5 and 7 pounds, while the single-action pull is between 3 and 4 pounds, but Wilson's focus is on smoothness.

As for the rest of the frame, Rimmer's order did not include changing the original black grips, but the Wilson Combat team beveled the mag well to improve the speed and ease of magazine changes.

The next step was to replace a number of the original parts with those that had been improved over the past two decades of service. Wilson Combat replaced the stock polymer guide rod with its own fluted steel guide rod. This 4140 heat-treated, Melonite-finished steel guide rod features flutes that hold lubrication and trap dirt, ensuring smoother and more consistent spring travel. Wilson also replaced the existing recoil spring with a 13-pound chrome-silicon spring, giving the Beretta's action some refreshed power and enhanced spring life. The final part change was an improved rear sight. The original 92FS had the government-issued white-dot rear sight with a square notch. The surface around the rear dot is smooth, and the shooter's eye must align a square with a circle. On the Wilson Combat replacement, however, the rounded notch matches instantly with the round front sight, and horizontal serrations on both sides reduce glare.

#### RETURN TRIP

Rimmer's fears quickly ebbed when the pistol arrived. "The finish is flawless," Rimmer said. "It looks like it just came out of the shrink wrap. Most Marines don't get brand-new weapons, so this was a positive change from what I was used to. Just the finest craftsmanship all around. The overall look is sharper and cleaner."

But the real changes were most notable on the range. "Though this is the same pistol I had before, the performance is not anywhere close to the same. The action is super-smooth, and the trigger is consistent. Coming up on target with the DA/SA trigger is much improved. It's a much smoother weapon than the one I sent to them."

But the most unexpected surprise came from his wife. "The Beretta is a large pistol, and the manipulation of the weapon is not simple on the issued model. But with the smoother action, my wife now has a much easier and more enjoyable time practicing with it. She's much more comfortable with it now than she once was," Rimmer added. **TW**

#### INFO BOX

**BERETTA**  
beretta.com

**WILSON COMBAT**  
wilsoncombat.com;  
800-955-4856

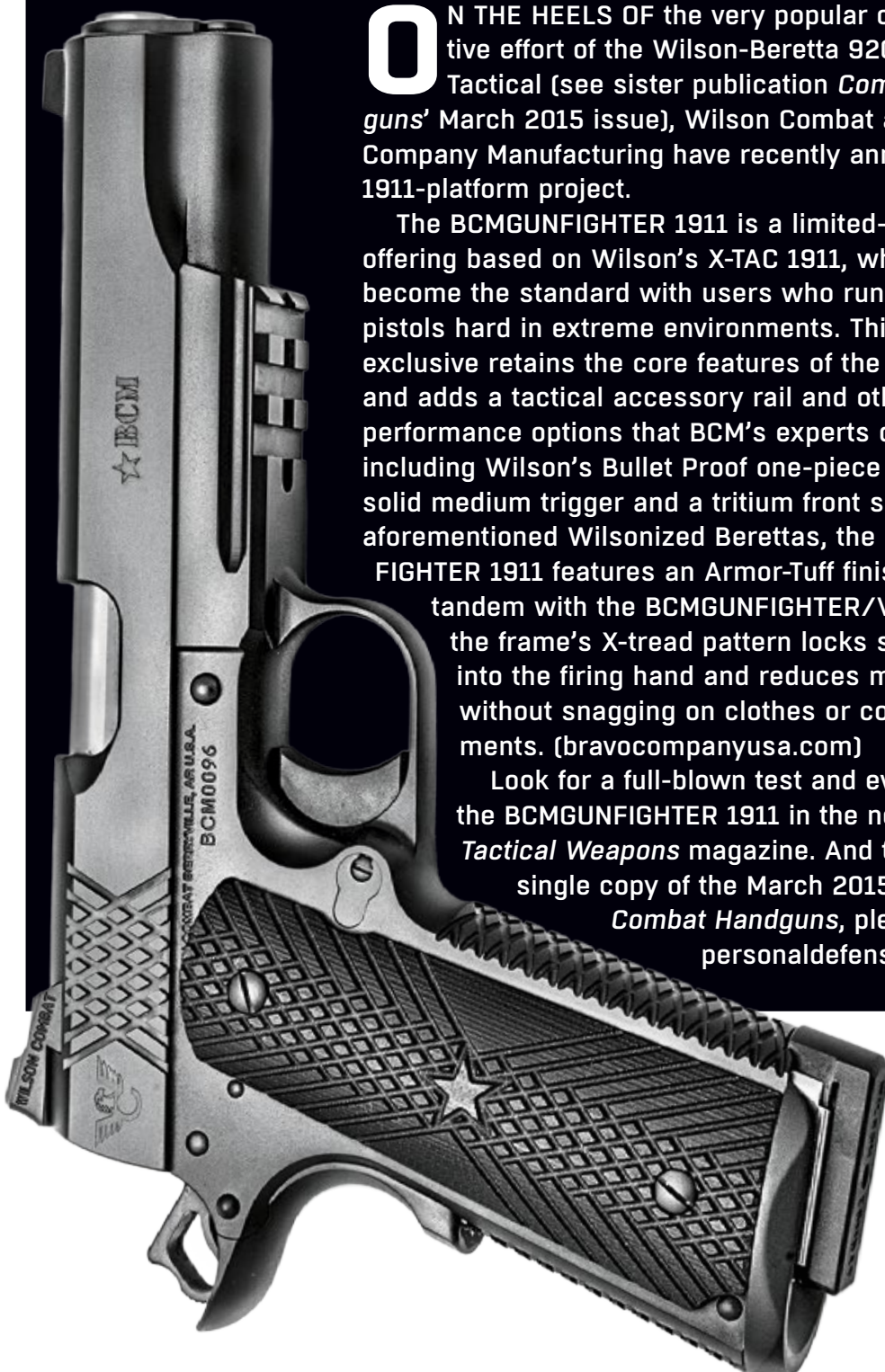
## WILSON'S NEW 1911 GUNFIGHTER

**O**N THE HEELS OF the very popular collaborative effort of the Wilson-Beretta 92G Brigadier Tactical (see sister publication *Combat Handguns*' March 2015 issue), Wilson Combat and Bravo Company Manufacturing have recently announced a 1911-platform project.

The BCMGUNFIGHTER 1911 is a limited-production offering based on Wilson's X-TAC 1911, which has become the standard with users who run their 1911 pistols hard in extreme environments. This BCM exclusive retains the core features of the X-TAC and adds a tactical accessory rail and other select performance options that BCM's experts demanded, including Wilson's Bullet Proof one-piece mag well, a solid medium trigger and a tritium front sight. Like the aforementioned Wilsonized Berettas, the BCMGUNFIGHTER 1911 features an Armor-Tuff finish. In

tandem with the BCMGUNFIGHTER/VZ G10 grips, the frame's X-tread pattern locks securely into the firing hand and reduces muzzle flip without snagging on clothes or covering garments. (bravocompanyusa.com)

Look for a full-blown test and evaluation of the BCMGUNFIGHTER 1911 in the next issue of *Tactical Weapons* magazine. And to snare a single copy of the March 2015 issue of *Combat Handguns*, please visit [personaldefenseworld.com](http://personaldefenseworld.com).





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# MKA 1919 MATCH SCATTERGUN

**EAA's new 12-gauge Turkish import treads on ground familiar to AR-15 enthusiasts.**

BY DAVID BAHDE • STRAIGHT 8 PHOTOS

**AS A LONGTIME TACTICAL SHOTGUN USER, IT IS ALWAYS EXCITING TO SEE NEW DESIGNS THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF MODERN SHOOTERS BETTER.**

I come from an era where you figured out how to use what was assigned, so it is nice to see weapons built for shooters. Typical shotguns use tubular magazines, limiting their capacity and making reloading problematic at best, especially in a real-world tactical environment. Sure, they are better these days, but for the most part tubular-magazine-fed shotguns have been retooled, accessorized and altered to their limits of reliable

and practical operation. Yes, they are faster, smoother and better than ever before, but they're still tubular-magazine-fed shotguns, and many alterations have no place outside a competition. In short, keeping these shotguns loaded and operating in a police or tactical environment remains their biggest drawback. While other issues have presented themselves, this is the one most commonly cited as why shotguns are replaced with ARs, and it is pretty hard to argue with. Having a shotgun that operates just like an AR would be a ton easier to use, train with and transition to from your AR-style rifle.



The shotgun sports an A2-style front sight and a polymer handguard similar to an AR's, and the 18.5-inch barrel comes with three interchangeable chokes as well as a tool to install them securely.

Prior to the introduction of the Turkish-made MKA 1919, attempts at an AR-based 12-gauge shotgun were pretty rare. The USAS-12 was very interesting and fun to shoot, but it's a select-fire weapon. That, coupled with its Korean point of origin, made it a novelty, even when attempts were made to import semi-automatic variants. For military use, there's the AA-12 or Atchisson Assault shotgun, but it's only available in full-auto, making it even more rare.

A truly viable AR-style shotgun did not arrive until the Akdal MKA 1919 hit the market in 2007. About as close to an AR as it gets, it has become incredibly popular among enthusiasts and competitors, with some law enforcement agencies getting their hands on it. Imported from Turkey, it is lightweight and affordable, and now it's available in completely modified versions. Base guns cost \$500, with systems like the Tooth & Nail conversion running closer to \$2,000. The original magazine capacity was five rounds, with 10-round aftermarket versions available. It's all neat stuff, but the MKA 1919 has been just a bit out of reach for most looking for a duty shotgun. But, the MKA 1919 Match, imported by European American Armory (EAA) Corporation, has done quite a bit to change that.

### MATCH GRADE

The MKA 1919 Match is a magazine-fed, AR-style shotgun designed to use both 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ - and 3-inch shells. Built largely from

## SPEC BOX

### EAA MKA 1919 MATCH

**GAUGE:** 12; 3-inch chamber

**BARREL:** 18.5 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 39.5 inches

**WEIGHT:** 7.5 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** Polymer

**SIGHTS:** A2 front, carry handle rear

**ACTION:** Semi-auto

**FINISH:** Matte black

**CAPACITY:** 5+1

**MSRP:** \$699

polymer, it is lightweight and handy. Similar to a full-sized AR-15, it uses a flattop rail, a detachable carry handle/rear sight and an A2-style front sight post.

The shotgun's controls mimic those of the AR, and the MKA 1919 Match uses an ambidextrous safety along with enlarged bolt and magazine releases. Its magazines are metal, and the action locks open after the last round. An enlarged charging handle is paired with the redesigned bolt. Both the action and loading block have been redesigned for increased reliability.

EAA ships the MKA 1919 Match with two metal, five-round magazines that can accept either 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ - or 3-inch shells. After the last round is fired, the bolt locks back—a plus for today's operators.

It's now easier to take the MKA 1919 Match down for cleaning and maintenance, and two gas rings as well as a floating metal feed ramp have been installed for enhanced reliability with different types of ammunition. EAA ships the shotgun with two metal, five-round magazines, three chokes and a tool to install them.

### RANGE REPORT

Primarily focused on the MKA 1919 Match's use as a mostly out-of-the-box tactical shotgun, the only accessory I added for testing was a Bushnell Elite Tactical 1x32mm CQTS red-dot sight, which has seen use on several weapons and has held up well over time. It mounts easily, is pretty light and offers fast target acquisitions. As I mentioned, the MKA 1919 Match ships with an AR-style carry handle/rear sight, although it is not nearly as substantial as a typical A2-style carry handle. I used it for the first few rounds on the range, and it works fine, but the red dot offers a bit more precision. If you plan on running a miniature reflex sight, you'll probably need to add a riser to work with the front sight. (Also, the front sight is not a gas block and can be removed easily if needed. Just loosen two screws and it'll slide right off. But, short of adding an aftermarket handguard, you'll have no front sight capability.)

Much of this shotgun is polymer, making it pretty light. Its official weight is 7.5 pounds unloaded, and it felt similar to running a 20-inch-barreled AR. It also utilizes a fixed stock with a 14.5-inch length of pull, which is a tad long in the tactical world. It was usable while wearing body armor, but it took some practice to get the shotgun quickly into my shoulder pocket. Those with shorter arms may find the MKA 1919 Match cumbersome. Add plates and a carrier and it will be a bit more difficult to maintain a squared stance.

The factory handguard is long, making it really easy to get a solid handhold. Even if you hold the handguard close to the receiver, you'll still be in control. It was also easy to stretch my support hand farther down the forend to effectively control the



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## EAA MKA 1919 MATCH



With a Bushnell CQTS red-dot sight mounted on the top rail, the MKA 1919 Match ran flawlessly on the range and produced tight patterns during testing.

muzzle rise. Moving between targets, the shotgun was fast, solid and accurate.

The two supplied chokes use the Winchester thread pattern, so you can add brakes and such with the same threads. The shotgun patterned well with the standard choke that came installed, so there was no need to install the others.

### FEEDING THE BEAST

My biggest concern with this shotgun was its reliability right out of the box. EAA states that it ran 6,000 rounds through an MKA 1919 Match without a single failure. It is also supposed to run lower-recoil practice loads. From my perspective, with an MSRP of \$699, this is critical. Most

patrol shotguns are pretty Spartan, so all the goodies are nice but not necessarily required. It does need to work, though, and with practice ammunition.

I ran several popular loads through this shotgun, and they all worked perfectly, including the most common police practice load, Federal's 1,200-fps Top Gun Target ammo. The MKA 1919 Match functioned with both low- and high-brass loads, along with aluminum- and brass-rimmed hulls. Firing slugs into a 4-inch circle at 25 yards, the shotgun was plenty accurate. With tactical buckshot, the MKA 1919 Match created patterns on par with most every shotgun these days—inside 6 inches out to 25 yards and one large hole from 15 yards and in. This shotgun performed as well as any of the customized shotguns I've tested in the last few years.

The shotgun is pretty comfortable to shoot from prone, which is something you can't say about most tubular-magazine-fed shotguns. The MKA 1919 Match's ergonomics mimic an AR's, making it easy to stay accurate from off-hand, kneeling, prone and other unsupported positions. Using an overhand grip, the shotgun stayed put, even with full-bore slugs and



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“The MKA 1919 Match’s ergonomics mimic an AR’s, making it easy to stay accurate from off-hand, kneeling, prone and other unsupported positions.”



high-power buckshot. I only used 2¾-inch shells since 3-inch shells are rare in police circles. While 3-inch magnum buckshot is the norm in the military, 2¾-inch shells are preferred in law enforcement. With the Bushnell CQTS red dot, the MKA 1919 Match was fast on target and light on recoil. It swings just like an AR and points similarly, and even its trigger is typical of a mil-spec model.

The bolt locks back after the last round, and the bolt release worked every time. During my testing, this was the biggest single advantage. Reloading this shotgun was just like reloading one of my ARs. The magazines fit in my .308 pouches and chest rigs, making the transition pretty simple. The only difference was the need to run the bolt handle instead of a charging handle when necessary. Over the course of the day, the action never failed to go into battery using the bolt release, so it never came up as a rule. While I didn’t test the original MKA 1919, the Match’s enlarged bolt and magazine releases are the perfect size; they’re very easy to access without getting in the way.

The ambidextrous safety was also very handy. It was crisp and operated just like my similarly equipped ARs, meaning I didn’t have to alter years of training. In short, moving back and forth between the shotgun and an AR was seamless.

## PERFORMANCE

### EAA MKA 1919 MATCH

BUCKSHOT	PATTERN
Federal 00 LE127	1.55
Federal 00 P156	2.00
Hornady 00 TAP Light Magnum	1.75
SLUG	ACCURACY
Federal Tactical 1-ounce	4.25
Fiocchi 1-ounce	4.00

Buckshot spread in inches at 15 yards.  
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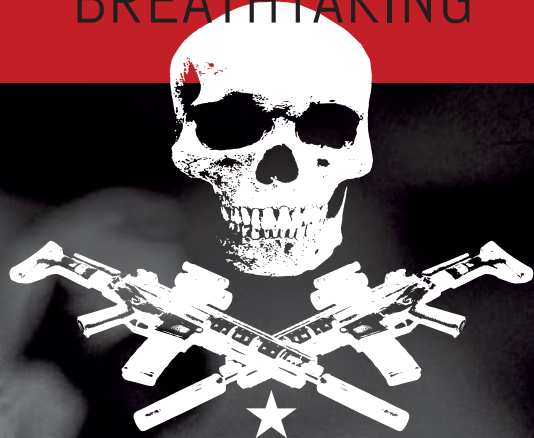
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## EAA MKA 1919 MATCH



The MKA 1919 Match comes with an AR-style carry handle/rear sight that can be removed for adding sights and optics to the top rail. Also note the shotgun's enlarged, right-side-mounted charging handle.



### AR-STYLE BEAST

If you are looking for a duty shotgun requiring no real change in operation from your AR, this gun fits the bill about as well as possible. That's probably why more than a few agencies have inquired about them. Transitioning to the MKA 1919 Match would be pretty seamless beyond learning to run a right-side-mounted charging handle when needed.

As I mentioned, the shotgun ran flawlessly and the bolt always held open after the last round. Even my VEPR would not do that without alteration, and no similar semi-automatic shotgun I've tested has worked this well right out of the box. The MKA 1919 Match is also a soft shooter, making typical tactical buckshot loads very controllable and easy on the shoulder.

For serious consideration as a police shotgun, you'll need to mount a flashlight. There are a few inexpensive barrel mounts that might work with the MKA 1919 Match.

You could also install a railed handguard, but since it's an import, you'll need to make sure you are still 922r compliant. Several companies make aftermarket accessories to accommodate this for the earlier versions. Many are working on them for the Match. Given time, this won't be an issue.

Overall, this was an impressive shotgun. It ran well with the most popular practice ammunition used by competitors and law enforcement. Its accuracy with slugs was excellent.

The MKA 1919 Match is a pretty solid choice for duty. It is easily as well equipped for patrol work as most of the other choices out there, and at about half the cost, so it's definitely worth a close look if you are in the market for a semi-automatic shotgun. For more information, visit [eaacorp.com](http://eaacorp.com) or call 321-639-4842. *TW*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** See the author wringing out the MKA 1919 on [tactical-life.com](http://tactical-life.com).

## ➤ NEXT-GEN EAA MKA 1919 MATCH PRO



EAA's new MKA 1919 Match Pro has several enhancements. The aluminum handguard has a full-length top rail for attaching a front sight or other accessories. A shorter rail on the bottom can accommodate a tactical light or laser sight, preventing them from blocking the view of the sights or optics. On the sides of the handguard are eight attachment points for mounting

more rails if desired. The handguard has several lightening cuts along its length that also help dissipate barrel heat. The sides of the handguard are diagonally grooved for a more secure hold. The new features of the MKA 1919 Match Pro make an already versatile 12-gauge shotgun even more useful for home defense, competition or sporting use in the field. —William Bell



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# BERETTA 1301 TACTICAL

**Run and gun on the range or on duty with this ultra-fast, ultra-light 12-gauge stallion!**

**BY LEROY THOMPSON**

**B**eretta has a long tradition of making fine shotguns dating back centuries, but it is best known for producing fine side-by-side and over/under shotguns. Although some Beretta double-barreled shotguns have probably had their barrels chopped to make the *lupara* fighting shotguns carried in Sicily, Beretta did not begin making tactical shotguns until the last 30 years or so. The 1201FP, Beretta's early self-loading shotgun, is no longer in production. Neither is the excellent box-magazine-fed M3P, which came about in response to bid specifications by the Italian armed forces for a shotgun that could operate as both a self-loader or a pump action. The Benelli M3 shotgun originated from those same big specifications.

Currently, though, Beretta is making a very useful self-loading tactical shotgun—the 1301 Tactical. Its BLINK operating system employs a gas piston with a rotating two-lug bolt that locks into the barrel extension. I've seen the system compared to that of the AR-15. Under recoil, the piston is pushed back towards the receiver, where it impacts a

steel collar at the front of the guide rods to drive everything to the rear, ejecting the empty shell and cocking the internal hammer prior to chambering a new shell from the tubular magazine, and returning the piston to the chamber ready for next shot. Beretta advertises the BLINK system as being 36-percent faster than any other shotgun on the market. I'll take the company's word, as it operates very quickly for follow-up shots. A plus to the 1301 Tactical's cross-tube gas piston design is that it is self-cleaning. The piston's elastic seal is designed to remove gunpowder residue from the gas cylinder as it travels.

## HANDS ON

The first thing I noticed when I unpacked the 1301 Tactical shotgun from its case is that it is very light and handy. I consider that a real advantage in a tactical shotgun. Its aluminum receiver and hollow polymer stock help in regards to its

light weight. The stock and forend have deep checkering that helps shooters control the 1301 Tactical during fast firing. Grooves along both sides of the forend offer additional control, providing a very solid grip for the support hand.

The shotgun's length of pull is only 13 inches, which keeps its overall length down. This is also a good length for firing when wearing body armor. For anyone with longer arms, Beretta includes spacers to lengthen the synthetic stock. The stock may also be adjusted to fit the shooter with two shims that can be placed between the stock and the receiver.

Import regulations limit the magazine capacity of the 1301 Tactical to four rounds (though I gather some 2¾-inch shells allow five to be loaded into the magazine tube). However, when the shotgun arrives, it is blocked to only take two rounds in the magazine. The limiter may be removed relatively easily.

To maximize a self-loading tactical shotgun's potential, however, it needs the largest magazine capacity possible, so I ordered a Briley two-shot extension and installed it easily. The tube does

**Beretta's 1301 Tactical is one of the fastest semi-auto 12 gauges on the market. Shown with a Mesa Tactical SureShell carrier and a Briley magazine extension.**

Ken MacSwan Photo

**“I found the shotgun's light weight, short overall length and good sights allowed for fast targeting.”**





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# PERFORMANCE

## BERETTA 1301 TACTICAL

BUCKSHOT	PATTERN
Olin GI 00 (9 pellets)	7.00*
Federal Magnum #4 (41 pellets)	19.00**
Federal Tactical #4 (27 pellets)	10.00*
SLUG	ACCURACY
Federal Tactical 1-ounce	2.50

Buckshot pattern in inches at 15\* and 25\*\* yards. Slug accuracy in inches for three shots at 50 yards.

**ABOVE:** The front sight has protective wings, and the author added a two-shot extension to the four-round magazine tube.

**LEFT:** The 1301 Tactical comes with a large, left-side-mounted charging handle. Also note the large bolt release below it.

protrude a bit beyond the muzzle, but not by much, and certainly not enough to be a cause for concern.

I have come to prefer ghost-ring sights on tactical shotguns, and the ghost ring on the 1301 Tactical, which is adjustable for windage and elevation, is quite good. The white dots on each side, combined with the one on the front post, aid in low-light shooting as well as longer-range shooting with slugs. The 1301 Tactical comes with a small 3-inch Picatinny rail in front of the rear sight. I replaced this with a Mesa Tactical SureShell carrier with an integral rail. Mesa Tactical offers versions of the SureShell for the 1301 Tactical that hold either four or six shells—I chose the latter, thus giving me 12 rounds with a full tubular magazine. The Picatinny rail on the Mesa Tactical SureShell carrier is about the same size as the factory one, and it screwed into the original rail's holes atop the receiver. This rail was perfect for mounting a miniature reflex sight.

The 1301 Tactical's ergonomics are excellent. The safety has a large head and is located at the front of the triggerguard, where the trigger finger may readily push it off. However, to apply it, it is necessary to reach under the triggerguard or use the support hand. Normally, being able to take the safety off quickly is more important. The shotgun's triggerguard is large enough for shooters wearing tactical or winter gloves. A real boon is the charging handle, which is large and ribbed for ease of operation. I found that I could readily operate it with the support hand reaching under the receiver. Loading is easy due to the width of the loading port and the design of the shell carrier.

Speaking of loading, an important aspect of a tactical shotgun is ease of unloading, especially without having to chamber rounds. With the 1301 Tactical, this operation may be carried out by lifting the shell carrier and pressing the rear portion of the bolt release.

# SPEC BOX

## BERETTA 1301 TACTICAL

**GAUGE:** 12; 3-inch chamber

**BARREL:** 18.5 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 37.8 inches

**WEIGHT:** 6.3 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** Synthetic

**SIGHTS:** Fixed front post, ghost ring rear

**ACTION:** Semi-auto

**FINISH:** Matte black

**CAPACITY:** 4+1 (2¾-inch shells)

**MSRP:** \$1,075



Mesa Tactical's SureShell carrier comes with an integral Picatinny rail for sights and holds four or six shells at the ready.






## RANGE THUNDER

I fired 100 rounds through the 1301 Tactical using three types of buckshot and one slug style. By the way, unlike some Beretta shotguns, the 1301 Tactical does not have a removable choke but instead uses a fixed cylinder-bore choke. The trigger pull was quite good. Beretta advertises the trigger pull as weighing 4 pounds, and the reset was fast as well.

Firing at steel plates, I found the shotgun's light weight, short overall length and good sights allowed for fast targeting. The lighter weight does make recoil more noticeable, however, especially with 3-inch magnum cartridges. I do quite a bit of tactical shotgun shooting and can attest that the recoil was more noticeable with the magnum loads than with most other shotguns I've fired. The thin recoil pad that is standard on the 1301 Tactical helps keep the overall length down, but it absorbs less recoil. Finally, the shotgun's reliability was excellent no matter what loads I used.

I like the Beretta 1301 Tactical quite well. It is fast handling and reliable. For an individual or an agency wanting a self-loading tactical shotgun, it's a highly viable option. For more information, visit [beretta.com](http://beretta.com). 



## BERETTA 1301 COMP

**I**F 3-GUNNING is your thing, this semi-auto is designed for competition right out of the box.

It cycles extremely quickly, with Beretta's proprietary B gas system capable of pumping out four rounds in less than a second. The 1301 Comp has oversized controls, including the cocking handle and bolt-release lever, as well enlarged loading and ejection ports. The receiver comes drilled and tapped for rail mounts, and the length of pull is adjustable to conform to individual shooting styles and clothing.

<b>GAUGE:</b>	12; 3-inch chamber
<b>BARREL:</b>	21 or 24 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	43 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Synthetic
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Fiber-optic front, mid-bead
<b>ACTION:</b>	Semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	5+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,255



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# DYNAMIC TROY DUO




Troy Defense has partnered with two highly respected trainers, Kyle Lamb of Viking Tactics and Frank Proctor of Way of the Gun, to produce two exceptional 5.56mm carbines: the SGM Lamb (above) and Proctor (below).





## A look at a pair of Special Forces-inspired carbines built to run and gun in the harshest extremes!

BY ROB GARRETT



III →

Sergeant Major Kyle Lamb served for more than 21 years with the U.S. Army, more than 15 years of which were in special operations. After retiring, he founded Viking Tactics (VTAC) and spends the majority of his time training armed citizens, law enforcement officers and members of the military.

**A patriot is defined** as one who loves and supports his or her country. The term is more than applicable to Steve Troy of Troy Industries and Kyle Lamb of Viking Tactics. Steve spent over 22 years as a Massachusetts state trooper. He also served for 23 years in the United States Air Force Reserves Security Forces. During that time, he not only protected the citizens of Massachusetts but also deployed to the Middle East. In his free time, he started the company that bears his name. In a short 12 years, Troy Industries has become a leader in small arms accessories, with its Battle-branded products setting a new industry standard. In 2011, Steve founded Troy Defense in order to build a complete rifle to compete in the Army's Improved Carbine solicitation.

Part of Steve's success has been surrounding himself with like-minded people, one of those being Kyle Lamb. Kyle served more than 21 years in the U.S. Army, with the majority of that time in the special operations community. During that time, he deployed to a lot of hostile places, including Mogadishu, Somalia, where, as part of Task Force Ranger, he participated in the event that has come to be known as "Black Hawk Down." This vast operational experience made Kyle a subject matter expert on both tactics and gear.



Lucas Lamb Photo



## TROY DEFENSE CARBINES



The SGM Lamb Carbine's 15-inch Troy/VTAC Alpha Rail makes it easy for users to get a comfortable grip.

After retirement, Kyle founded his own company, Viking Tactics (VTAC). Through VTAC, Kyle shares his experience in tactical firearms instruction, leadership seminars and private consulting. In addition, he has developed an extensive line of tactical products and training DVDs, and he has also written two books.

Throughout his career, Kyle has had the opportunity to evaluate the best gear in the worst circumstances and locations in the world. It is these experiences that

have enabled him to develop gear that is simple and effective. The combined experiences of Steve and Kyle created a perfect blend of philosophy and products. Their partnership has resulted in the Troy/VTAC BattleRail, several VTAC sling adaptors and the excellent VTAC sling.

### BY WARRIORS, FOR WARRIORS

The latest collaboration between Steve and Kyle is the Troy Defense SGM Lamb Carbine. The Lamb Carbine represents the

best of Troy and VTAC, all in a single package. Troy was kind enough to send *Tactical Weapons* one of the first pre-production rifles to leave the factory.

The new rifle begins with mil-spec upper and lower receivers. All Troy Defense SGM Lamb Carbines will feature a serial number prefix of "KEL," Kyle's initials. The lower receiver features Troy's ambidextrous safety to suit both right- and left-handed shooters. In fact, I'd go on to admit that the safety is one of the best ambidextrous designs I have used. The paddle on the right side is both shorter and has a lower profile than the standard configuration. For right-handed shooters, this design minimizes interference between the paddle and the trigger finger.

Additional enhancements include the BattleAx grip, triggerguard and stock. The enhanced BattleAx pistol grip is set at a specific angle to improve comfort and reduce strain on the wrist. The surface is textured, with horizontal lines on the front and backstraps while the sides have a diamond pattern. The enhanced triggerguard's shape increases the clearance, offering more space when using gloves. The most distinctive feature of the new rifle



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## SPEC BOX

### TROY DEFENSE SGM LAMB CARBINE

**CALIBER:** 5.56mm NATO

**BARREL:** 16 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 33-36 inches

**WEIGHT:** 6 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** BattleAx CQB

**SIGHTS:** Folding BattleSights

**ACTION:** Direct impingement semi-auto

**FINISH:** Matte black or tan

**CAPACITY:** 30+1

**MSRP:** \$1,749 - \$1,899

is the six-position Troy BattleAx CQB stock, which features a wide top profile that provides a comfortable and consistent cheek-weld. The overmolded rubber buttplate is tapered to seat comfortably in the shoulder. The buttplate is hinged to allow access to a large storage compartment.

Troy equipped the Lamb Carbine with a Geissele Super V trigger. Bill Geissele, who founded the company in 2004, has an extensive background in high-power rifle competition. The Geissele Super Select-Fire (SSF) trigger has become the trigger of choice for the U.S. special operations community. The Geissele Super V trigger that came equipped on our test Troy SGM Lamb Carbine had a very clean break that measured 4.75 pounds with a quick and crisp reset. It's certainly a boon for shooting accurate groups quickly.

The Lamb Carbine is set up with a 16-inch, match-grade, 1-in-7-inch-twist barrel that is chambered in 5.56mm NATO and features Troy's Medieval flash suppressor. The direct-impingement Lamb Carbine also uses a mid-length gas system. The bolt carrier group is hard chromed and has a properly staked gas key.

Surrounding the barrel and gas system is a 15-inch Troy/VTAC free-floating Alpha Rail that features the signature elongated cooling slots. An additional series of holes is drilled along the sides of the top rail. Finally, Troy sets up each carbine with its excellent folding BattleSights with the Diamond Di-Optic rear sight. The large aperture is set up for 0 to 200 meters while the smaller diamond is calibrated for 300 to 600 meters. Hash marks at 3, 6, 9 and 12 o'clock make it easier to quickly line the rear sight up with the front sight post.

Troy includes a number of accessories with the Lamb Carbine. These include a Troy/VTAC sling, QD swivels, a set of quick-attach rails and a low-profile QD sling



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## TROY DEFENSE CARBINES



**1.** The SGM Lamb Carbine's 16-inch barrel comes capped with Troy's Medieval flash suppressor. **2.** Troy also outfits the SGM Lamb Carbine with a Geissele Super V trigger. **3.** The VTAC low-profile sling mount is easy to add to Picatinny rails. **4.** Both the SGM Lamb and Proctor carbines come with Troy's rock-solid BattleAx CQB buttstock.

attachment. The VTAC sling is the flagship of Viking Tactics' line of accessories. The length can be quickly and easily adjusted by simply pulling a tab or releasing a buckle. In addition, three Troy 30-round BattleMags are included with each rifle. I have been using Troy magazines exclusively for the past year and found them to be reliable and durable. The reinforced feed lips do not require a dust cover for protection, and the anti-tilt follower ensures positive feeding.

### THE LAMB'S CHOPS

I installed a Leupold 2.5-8x36mm Mark 4 M2 tactical scope in a LaRue SPR mount for the 100-yard accuracy testing. The TMR reticle and brilliant light-gathering capabilities make the Mark 4 series of scopes the choice of both military and law enforcement units. I have found this particular scope to be extremely versatile, and it has become my go-to glass for any AR evaluation.

Over the years, Hornady's Tactical Application Police, or TAP, ammunition has become the ammunition of choice for the law enforcement community. Hornady loads TAP ammunition to the highest standards for enhanced reliability, consistent performance and low muzzle

## PERFORMANCE

### TROY DEFENSE SGM LAMB CARBINE

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 40 TAP	3,451	0.97
Hornady 55 TAP	2,811	0.79
Hornady 62 TAP Barrier	2,738	0.81

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best five-shot groups at 100 yards.

signature. The TAP line offers several different loads for different mission parameters. These same parameters can be applied to hunting and sporting uses. We tested the 40-grain TAP Urban load, the 55-grain TAP Urban load and the 62-grain barrier load.

The 40-grain load is designed for immediate rapid expansion and complete fragmentation with 7 inches of penetration. This makes it ideal for environments where overpenetration is a concern. This load averaged 3,451 fps and produced a 0.97-inch group at 100 yards. The 55-grain load is a general-purpose law enforcement round that combines effective terminal ballistics with mid-range barrier-penetration capabilities. The 55-grain TAP Urban averaged 2,811 fps and produced a 0.79-inch group. The 62-grain load provides significant penetration as well as effective





**Troy Defense  
Proctor Carbine**

terminal ballistics. The 62-grain load averaged 2,738 fps and produced a group that measured 0.81 inches.

Next we removed the Leupold scope and ran drills using the iron sights. I had forgotten how much fun, and how accurate, iron sights could be. The diamond shape of the rear sight aperture was significantly easier to use than a traditional round aperture. The only thing that would make the sights better is a tritium front post, and luckily that is available as an option.

Our overall impression of the Lamb Carbine was very positive. It's ideal for general sporting use, 3-Gun or law enforcement.

#### PROCTOR POWERHOUSE

Troy Defense also offers another signature rifle done in collaboration with Frank Proctor. Like Lamb, Proctor served

#### SPEC BOX

##### TROY DEFENSE PROCTOR CARBINE

**CALIBER:** 5.56mm NATO

**BARREL:** 16 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 31.25-34.5 inches

**WEIGHT:** 6 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** BattleAx CQB

**SIGHTS:** Folding BattleSights

**ACTION:** Direct impingement semi-auto

**FINISH:** Matte black or tan

**CAPACITY:** 30+1

**MSRP:** \$1,749-\$1,899

with distinction in the U.S. Special Forces, during which time he deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan. He also served as an instructor for Special Forces units and has competed in multiple disciplines. He now runs his own company, Way of the Gun, offering courses for both civilian and law enforcement/military personnel.

The Proctor Carbine is similar to the Lamb Carbine but features a 14.5-inch

barrel with Troy's new Competition Muzzle Device (CMD), a combination muzzle brake and flash suppressor. Spiral cuts separate the three prongs while a blast chamber utilizes side ports to stabilize the rifle.

Surrounding the barrel is Troy's 13-inch Alpha Rail with round cooling holes. The rear BattleSight features a round aperture while the folding M4 front BattleSight has a tritium insert. The Proctor Carbine is equipped with a match-grade CMC trigger. Accessories include a Way of the Gun Proctor sling and three Troy BattleMags.

In a very short time, Troy Defense has grown from an accessory company to a full-blown firearms manufacturer. It has also partnered with two well-respected veterans and trainers to produce truly exceptional rifles. While I was only able to evaluate the Lamb Carbine, I have no doubt that the Proctor Carbine is equally impressive. **TW**

#### INFO BOX

**TROY DEFENSE**  
troydefense.com; 413-788-4214

**VIKING TACTICS**  
vikingtactics.com; 910-987-5983

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# TANK-TOUGH RIFLE CASES

These ultra-durable long-gun cases surely aren't short of quality, ready-to-roll features!

BY JORGE AMSELLE

**S**toring and traveling with long guns can present much more of a challenge than traveling with handguns simply because of their size. Of course, traveling with firearms always presents a challenge, as there are various local and state laws that affect your possession of some types of guns outside your home state. Indeed, traveling by car or air across state lines requires that specific guidelines be adhered to and followed. A good solid and compact

case that allows you to take your self-defense tools with you is a big part of what makes this possible.

For all air travel with firearms, you need to have a hard-sided, lockable case that must be sent through as checked luggage and inspected by security to make sure it is unloaded. Fortunately, there are many long rifle cases that fit the bill and will protect your valuable rifles against even the most careless bag handlers. Here are some of the best around.



If you plan on traveling with a long gun, you need a strong, secure case like the Discreet Universal Rifle Case from Case Club.



## CASE CLUB GUN CASES

### 2 AR-15 RIFLE & ACCESSORY CASE

The Case Club 2 AR-15 Rifle & Accessory Case is well designed for the traveler who needs to bring multiple tactical rifles. The case will securely hold two AR carbines in the upright position with tons of space for a spare handgun or two, lots of accessories

and up to 19 magazines. The case is built from reinforced polymer and is completely waterproof, crushproof and dustproof to protect sensitive electronics. For security there are a total of six latches and six reinforced padlock points. A purge valve equalizes the pressure and elevation, and a silica gel canister is included to remove moisture from the interior.

### ECONOMICAL UNIVERSAL RIFLE CASE

The Case Club Economical Universal Rifle Case provides good protection to your rifle and accessories without breaking the bank. It's ideal for routine outings to the range or traveling on the interstate in your vehicle. The case is large enough for an AR with optics and spare magazines, and it is

secured with reinforced hinges and four latches. Each corner of the case also features a padlock attachment point for added security. The molded polymer outside will take a lot of bumps and scratches, while the interior egg crate foam will protect your guns and gear from damage.

### DISCREET UNIVERSAL RIFLE CASE

The Case Club Discreet Universal Rifle Case may cause people to put coins in your coffee cup and confuse you for an itinerant musician, but they

won't know that what you are carrying is actually a rifle case. Anyone with a concealed-carry permit who is concerned about discretion will be well served with this tough, hard-sided case made from a real guitar case as a base and fitted with a custom foam interior to accommodate one full-sized AR. The case also holds accessories, includes four latches (one of which can be locked) and features a comfortable, rubberized carry handle plus a lifetime guarantee. ([caseclub.com](http://caseclub.com); 877-412-2737)





## CASECRUZER EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS FOOTLOCKER

The Medium Emergency Preparedness Footlocker Trunk makes for an excellent survival/bug-out gun case for your home or vehicle. It is large enough to accommodate an AR carbine broken down between the upper and lower receivers, as well as a pistol box and assorted survival food, water and shelter accessories. The tough polymer case features reinforced hinges and five security latches as well as convenient carry handles, wheels for ease of transport and dual reinforced padlock points for security.



The case is unlined to maximize space, and the user can add soft padded gun cases or foam lining if desired.

([casecruzer.com](http://casecruzer.com); 909-613-1999)



## LOADED GEAR AX-500 HARD RIFLE CASE

The new Loaded Gear AX-500 53-inch Hard Rifle Case is now available in popular Flat Dark Earth and features a watertight, reinforced design. This hard-sided case will protect fragile electronics and optics as well as your firearms during transport. The O-ring lining completely seals the case from the outside elements, and with its four exterior latches, it's airtight. An exterior purge valve equalizes the case for pressurization at different elevations or when flying. Inside are two layers of egg crate foam. For security there are two external padlock-mounting points, and the case is wheeled for ease of transport. ([loadedgear.com](http://loadedgear.com); 888-666-6769)

## • PELICAN IM3300SGN & IM3300RFL

The Pelican ProGear iM3300RFL and iM3300SGN are designed to securely hold your sporting rifle or shotgun for transport with no chance of harm or damage. Pelican is already well known for manufacturing high-quality and high-strength cases for delicate electronics and equipment, and your long guns will get the same care with these cases. The iM3300RFL case is designed for sporting rifles with a universal foam insert, and the iM3300SGN case for shotguns features customizable utility foam. Both cases have plenty of extra room for accessories, press/pull latches and a polymer O-ring for a dustproof and watertight seal with automatic pressure equalization valve. ([pelican.com](http://pelican.com); 800-473-5422)



## PLANO BONE COLLECTOR

The Bone Collector All Weather Double Scoped Rifle Case is sure to find favor with hunters, long-range shooting competitors and those who travel frequently with scoped rifles. Designed by Plano in conjunction with famed hunter Michael Waddell, the Bone Collector Edition storage cases are truly designed for harsh environments. The case itself is made from a tough polymer with a watertight, airtight and dustproof interior. Six spring-loaded latches and two padlock points are included. It will accommodate rifles over 50 inches in length. ([planomolding.com](http://planomolding.com); 800-226-9868)



## PLANO MIL-SPEC CASES

Plano's new Field Locker Mil-Spec Double Long Gun Cases are designed to meet the requirements of law enforcement and military units. Available in multiple sizes, these are the toughest cases available from Plano. They're made from reinforced, molded polymer and feature dual security latches, dual reinforced padlock points and are waterproof and dustproof. For air travel, the wheeled case features an air pressure release valve and a heavy-duty handle. The interior is fully foam lined with double-density foam for superior protection of the valuable contents inside. ([planomolding.com](http://planomolding.com); 800-226-9868)



## QUICKFIRE QFA515 AR-15 CASE

The QuickFire QFA515 AR-15 Case is built from an injection-molded, ultra-high-strength polypropylene copolymer resin to mil-spec standards. The case features a gasket seal and a pressure equalization valve, making it watertight, impact resistant and dustproof. It can be submerged and will protect the contents against corrosion. The molded-in hinge trigger release latch system is very secure, and there are also multiple reinforced padlock points. There are cushion grip handles on three sides as well as in-line-skate-style wheels for transport. Inside, the foam insert will fit your rifle and add-ons. ([quickfirecases.com](http://quickfirecases.com); 800-819-4245)



## SEAHORSE SE1530

The Seahorse SE1530 rifle case features a tough, shockproof, reinforced-polymer shell that is both water- and dustproof. The interior features thick foam padding and an eggshell lid and is large enough for two long guns as well as gear, ammo, magazines and other accessories. On the outside there is an automatic pressure purge system to account for elevation and atmospheric conditions, molded padlock holes and locking latches. The case includes multiple carry handles and wheels for easy transport, and it's rated to international and military standards to withstand temporary immersion in water as well as dust and extreme temperature ranges. ([seahorse.net](http://seahorse.net); 626-339-6673)

## VANGUARD OUTBACK 60C

The Outback 60C from Vanguard is a tough, airline-approved rifle case. The top and bottom halves are made from a solid, one-piece, high-density polyethylene composite with no seams. This material is both strong and flexible to absorb shocks or impacts without damage to the contents. It is also lightweight and scratch resistant with a built-in key lock and additional padlock holders on the latch closures. The high-density foam interior features hook-and-loop fasteners and is large enough for one or two 40-inch-long guns. The case also has oversized rubber feet for easy upright storage. ([vanguardworld.com](http://vanguardworld.com); 800-875-3322)




## SMART LOCKDOWN

If you have a smartphone and a rifle case (or any other padlockable container), then you'll want to get your mitts on a new Quicklock Padlock. SafeTech, creator of The GunBox ([thegunbox.com](http://thegunbox.com)), has taken firearms security to the highest level of "tacti-cool" with the company's new electronic padlock. After initial pairing with your phone, the Quicklock Padlock unlocks via your smartphone's



Bluetooth signal or by the wave of an NFC fob, ring or label. That's right, no more wracking your brain for combinations or accidentally leaving or losing padlock keys. The easy-to-use Quicklock app (iOS or Android) even keeps track of who has opened your padlock and when. A simple wave or phone connection gives quick access to your gun to those of your choosing—and keeps

out the rest. With built-in data tracking, the Quicklock Padlock is more than just a smart lock—it can even be used as a portable inventory management or entry solution.

One phone can be used to control multiple padlocks. Because a number of different NFC-enabled wearable tech items can be used to unlock the padlock as well, including fobs, rings and keycards, the need for multiple keys is eliminated. A single Quicklock Padlock can store up to 50 NFC fobs/tags with rights to unlock it. For more information, visit [thequicklock.com](http://thequicklock.com). 



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## EASY DIY STEPS TO ACCURIZE AND MODERNIZE YOUR MILITARY-SURPLUS BATTLE CLASSIC!

BY DENIS PRISBREY • STEVE WOODS PHOTOS



While purists might consider it sacrilege, the vast quantity of surplus Mosin-Nagant rifles make it the perfect platform for sporterizing. The results can be truly surprising. Shown with a Leupold 3-9x40mm VX-1 riflescope.





# MOSIN-NAGANT

## BEFORE WE GET TOO FAR OUT OF THE GATE, FAIR WARNING:

The article you're about to read involves brutally chopping up a military classic, the Russian Model 91/30 Mosin-Nagant battle rifle of the 1930s and 1940s. While these things were made literally in the millions, and imported to our shores in large numbers for the past 15 or so years, there are many military-surplus purists who develop heart palpitations at the mere idea of altering a "classic" in any manner, way, shape or form. "These are pieces of history and they should be passed down to posterity as examples of history! And that means intact, mister!" While I share that viewpoint to a degree, I don't personally regard the Mosin-Nagant as being quite in the same category as Sergeant Alvin York's 1911 .45 ACP, Winston Churchill's iconic Thompson or Patton's Colt .45 Peacemaker.



Cutting the barrel down to 22 inches results in a handier rifle without losing any of the 7.62x54R accuracy.

## RUSSIAN FIGHTERS

The Mosin-Nagant rifles are a bit different, and here's why. At the end of World War II, the Soviet military apparatus recalled all Mosin-Nagant rifles not currently needed by a shrinking postwar army and refurbished them before stashing them in armories as emergency war reserves. That included re-barreling, re-bluing, re-stocking and rebuilding in general, including small parts replacements, as needed. In other words, while you could conceivably stumble across a rifle at your local

gun shop that participated in the Battle of Berlin in April of 1945 that effectively ended the Third Reich, chances are unlikely that it'd be *entirely* the same rifle. You could easily have a hexagonal receiver from 1929 mated to a postwar barrel riding in a laminated stock from the late 1940s bearing more than one arsenal stamping and the much later import company's markings. The Soviets weren't concerned with maintaining a "piece of history" in original form; their goal was to return a fighting tool to fighting trim, and in doing that there was a lot of mixing and matching going on. So, many of the rifles we see today lined up on the surplus rack dangling \$129 price tags were already altered in some way from their originally issued state 50 years before they ever left Mother Russia's dusty warehouses on the way here. And they have not always survived in precisely pristine condition.

Add that to the sheer numbers shipped and I think it's perfectly permissible to ask the die-hard collectors, "Just how many of these millions of rifles do we really need to stick in museums and pass down for posterity in their 'original' military form?" Admittedly, I've never yet been able to bring myself to sporterize a classic Mauser or Enfield, but let's be real here—there are more than enough Mosin-Nagants in varying grades and configurations out there to keep the collectors happy collecting and the sporterizers happy sporterizing.



## THE INSPECTION

With that said, if the goal is a thoroughly modernized rifle with a better stock, a scope, and a more maneuverable barrel than that 28-incher the Russian infantry liked so well, how do you get there? First off, if that is your goal, understand going in that this project is a labor of love (or at least fun), and you'll probably put far more money into it than a \$129 gun is worth unless you already have some components, do most of the work yourself or can find everything on sale.

The best way to start out is to find a Mosin-Nagant rifle you can look at in your own two hands. The wood's condition doesn't matter, so pay more attention to the barrel, action and bolt. The bores are usually in great shape with strong rifling; shine a light down the barrel of your rifle if you can. Check to make sure the bolt and receiver have matching *stamped* serial numbers, not electro-penciled numbers. Run the bolt; it should cycle fairly smoothly, but it might not if there's too much preservative cosmoline inside the chamber or raceway. Check to see if the trigger moves freely, dry-fire it once if the shop will let you. Make sure it works. Don't worry if the front sight's off-kilter, or the barrel bands are loose, or the buttplate's rusty. Those are all going away. Do watch for deep rust pitting on exterior steel surfaces; some can be deep enough to weaken the barrel, and unfortunately the ones most likely to do so are typically buried under the wood line, where you can't see them until the stock comes off.

## DISASSEMBLE & DEGUNK

Once you're home, you'll have that cosmoline to deal with, but since you won't be retaining the original wood, there's no reason to bother cleaning up the stock parts. Remove the bolt by pulling it out of the receiver while holding the trigger back. Remove the handguard by



**ABOVE:** Note how Rock Solid Industries' lowered bolt handle easily clears the scope, a necessary Mosin Nagant modification for a rear-mounted optic.



**RIGHT:** The barreled action and magazine were finished in matte black DuraCoat before being placed in the attractive and sturdy Boyds' walnut stock.

## SPEC BOX

### CUSTOM MOSIN-NAGANT

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62x54R
<b>BARREL:</b>	22 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	43 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Boyds' walnut
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Leupold 3-9x40mm VX-1
<b>ACTION:</b>	Bolt
<b>FINISH:</b>	DuraCoat
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	5
<b>MSRP:</b>	N/A

depressing the barrel-band retaining springs, sliding both bands forward and lifting the guard off. The rear band will slide around the front one and over the hooded front sight, but you'll need to spread the slightly smaller front band to clear the sight. Remove the two action screws, front and rear, lift the barreled action up out of the stock, and remove the magazine/trigger assembly from the bottom. (Watch the trigger pin—it's frequently loose and likes to make a break for freedom when nobody's looking.)

You can use any cleaner/solvent on a rag or paper towels at this point to degunk the metalwork you'll be keeping—with good ventilation. Scrub the bore thoroughly with your favorite cleaner. I start with a few cotton patches and Shooter's Choice to handle any old traces of copper remaining, then repeatedly apply a bronze bore brush (not stainless) and follow up with Break Free CLP on several more patches.

Once the bore, chamber and bolt raceways are clean and lightly oiled, wipe down the outside metal surfaces well with a cleaning fluid. I do it until the brown cotton patches or rag lighten up as indications that most of the rusty patina is lifted. Then, break the bolt down and

The oil-finished Boyds' Prairie Hunter stock features a high Monte Carlo comb, sling studs and a rubber recoil pad.





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## ARCHANGEL MOSIN-NAGANT STOCK

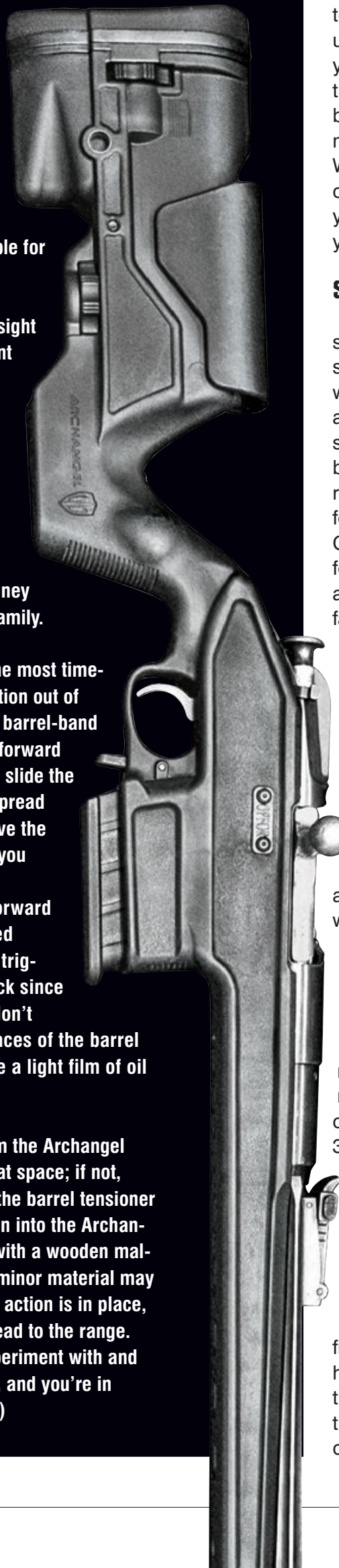
**T**here are several options you can take in updating a Mosin-Nagant rifle, and the Archangel AA9130 stock is one you can install at home, typically with just a pair of screwdrivers and a pair of pliers. This black, synthetic, drop-in stock adds just under 4 pounds to the weight of the barreled action—either full-length rifle or M44 carbine versions—replaces the fixed military, five-round, steel magazine with a detachable, five-round, polymer magazine (included), and features a buttstock that is fully adjustable for length of pull and cheek height.

**ANGELIC SPECS:** The Archangel includes a removable sight plug in the barrel channel to accommodate Mosin-Nagant variants with a full-circumference rear sight assembly (like the Type 53 and M44 versions), an adjustable/removable V-block barrel tensioner, a bottom-ventilated forend, a paddle-style magazine release, an oversized triggerguard, a steeply angled palm-swell grip with a storage compartment, a non-slip recoil pad, steel pillar beds and three integral sling swivel sockets if you choose to use them. The stock, available in black, OD green and desert tan, is also inletted for an optional Timney trigger, another popular upgrade for the Mosin-Nagant family.

**EASY INSTALL:** Initial installation is dead simple, and the most time-intensive part of the operation is getting the barreled action out of the original wood stock. Start by depressing the two flat barrel-band springs on the right side far enough to slide both bands forward and off the upper handguard. Lift the handguard off, and slide the barrel bands off over the front sight. (You may need to spread one or both bands with pliers to clear the hood, or remove the sight temporarily to avoid damaging the barrel bands if you plan to ever return to a full military configuration.)

Remove the rear upper action tang screw and the forward lower triggerguard assembly screw, and lift the barreled action out. You'll notice this will leave the entire lower triggerguard/magazine section still sitting in the wood stock since it's not attached to the action itself. This is fine—you don't need it for the Archangel stock. Clean the various surfaces of the barrel and action not normally visible, check for rust and wipe a light film of oil over those surfaces.

**FINISHING TOUCHES:** Remove the sight plug block from the Archangel stock with a Phillips screwdriver if your rifle requires that space; if not, leave it in. The company recommends starting out with the barrel tensioner removed; tap it out of its recess. Drop the barreled action into the Archangel, and if all goes well, it may take a couple light taps with a wooden mallet at the rear to fully seat it (as mine did). If not, some minor material may need to be removed to fit your action. Once the barreled action is in place, tighten down the two supplied new action screws and head to the range. Adjust the stock to your preferred length and height, experiment with and without the barrel tensioner, add a sling if you need one, and you're in business. (archangelmanufacturing.com; 623-500-3300)



get any last remaining cosmoline out that can interfere with the firing pin's movement. (There are several Internet sources for tutorials on how to do this, and how to check for correct firing pin protrusion using the combo gauge/screwdriver in your rifle's accessory cleaning kit.) Open the magazine by pulling the catch at the bottom to the rear, and swab out any cosmoline you find lurking in dark corners. With a lightly oiled bolt and a light coat of oil on your barreled action surfaces, you're ready to sit back and decide on your next step.

### STOCK OPTIONS

Bearing in mind that this will be a shooter, not a bragger, there isn't much sense in paying for fancy (read expensive) wood. You can find alternative materials and thoroughly modern designs (see the sidebar on the Archangel AA9130 install), but when setting up my 1940 Tula Arsenal rifle, I stayed with traditional walnut in the form of a Prairie Hunter stock from Boyds' Gunstock Industries. The oil-finished stock features a high Monte Carlo comb with a left-side cheekpiece, sling studs and a fairly hard, non-ventilated rubber recoil pad. I like how it looks, and while it'll eventually get a better pad, it shoulders well and positions my eye comfortably with the glass I chose for the Mosin-Nagant. This stock weighs roughly 2.8 pounds, and it's proportioned to look right at home with 22- to 26-inch barrels.

Advertised as fully inletted for drop-in installations, you may need to do some minor tweaking to fit your rifle's action. My solid walnut version cost \$119, while the same stock in either pepper or nutmeg laminate costs \$97.

### GLASS IT

If you're happy with iron sights, you can stop here. I wasn't, and the rifle needed a scope to maximize the accuracy potential I wanted to see in it. I called Leupold for advice and obtained a 3-9x40mm VX-1 scope with a matte black finish and a standard duplex reticle.

This lead-free, 11.2-ounce scope uses Leupold's proprietary Multicoat 4 technology for improved light transmission, 0.25-MOA finger clicks (no screwdriver or coin-slotted drum adjustments), a 34.6-foot field of view at its lowest magnification and a 14.6-foot field of view at its highest, and at an MSRP of \$249, it gives the Mosin-Nagant rifle adequate magnification at all practical ranges for the 7.62x54R chambering it uses.



## PERFORMANCE

### CUSTOM MOSIN-NAGANT

LOAD	VELOCITY	ACCURACY
Hornady 174 BTHP	2,696	0.75
Russian 147 1978 FMJ	N/A	0.69
Winchester 180 JSP	2,641	1.38

Bullet weight measured in grains, velocity in fps by chronograph, and accuracy in inches for best three-shot groups at 100 yards.

You can go higher or lower in pricing your glass, but coupled with a set of \$40 low steel Warne Maxima Fixed Rings to fit Weaver-style bases, this U.S.-made Leupold scope will get the basic job done for me with a name I trust.

Because of the Mosin-Nagant's receiver dimensions, you won't be able find a scope base for it at a store like Wal-Mart. Rock Solid Industries (RSI) produces several handy products for sporterizing Mosin-Nagants, one of which is a three-point, hardcoat anodized 6061-T6 aluminum mounting rail. There are other scope mounts on the market, but this one creates full support at the rear, and it works well with the Warne scope rings. You can order this scope mount to fit either hex or round receivers and prices range from \$100 to \$110, including three mounting screws, a hex wrench and detailed instructions if you're handy with power tools.

Since the short bolt handle rides straight up when cycling to the rear, it obviously can't work with a scope. RSI has three options to help out there: a handle you can order and weld onto your own bolt for \$30 (advanced skills required); a surplus bolt body the company modifies with its own handle and sells as a unit at \$80 (simple skills required to disassemble your bolt and reassemble with the body/handle); and RSI welding its handle onto your bolt when you send it in for that service for \$50 on top of the handle cost (only basic packaging skills needed here). I opted for the latter option, the safest way to go for tool-challenged people like me, and the bolt came back beautifully modified with no visible signs of the TIG welding done to it whatsoever. A set of \$10 RSI aluminum bedding pillars finished the parts shown, which I highly recommend.

### ALL TOGETHER

Once all the aforementioned pieces were worked out, the barrel was cut back to 22 inches, the rear sight and its dovetail base were surgically removed, and the

— Continued on page 124



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# KEEN EDGES



Today's lightning-fast fighters built for battle and beyond.

BY STEVEN DICK

The tactical folder field has become the most popular category of cutlery in the marketplace. Not only do thousands of civilians, emergency services and LEO personnel carry them on a daily basis, but these heavy-duty lockbacks have also replaced many traditional fixed blades for military use. What exactly makes a folder “tactical”? There might never be one true definition that everyone will agree on, but I can certainly give you mine. The knife needs to have a locking

system that should be stronger than a pocketknife's. After that, one-hand opening is absolutely essential for emergency use. A certain amount of blade length is desirable—no less than 3 inches with something over 3.5 inches being better. The blade and handle finishes should also be able to stand up to hard use in the field. So, what we end up with is a tough-as-nails, all-purpose tool that will always have your back. Here are just a few of the excellent choices modern knife carriers have as options.



**BENCHMADE HK 14715 AXIS**

Heckler & Koch is certainly one of the best-known names in tactical firearms, but Benchmade's folders with the same brand name are equally well designed for going into harm's way. Having carried a number of different Axis Lock folders over the years, I can also recommend this system as both easy to use and highly reliable. (benchmade.com; 800-800-7427)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.69 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.34 inches
WEIGHT:	4.96 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	D2
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Reversible
MSRP:	\$155



**BOKER PLUS MARLOWE SQUAIL**

Boker leads the cutlery industry in offering custom design collaborations with knifemakers in high demand. The Charles Marlowe Squail model is an excellent example of this. With its 4-inch, 440C steel blade, you would need to take a very close look at this heavy-duty tactical knife to see that it wasn't handmade. (boker.de/us; 800-835-6433)

BLADE LENGTH:	4 inches
OA LENGTH:	9 inches
WEIGHT:	6.63 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	440C
HANDLE:	Micarta
CLIP:	Tip down, right hand
MSRP:	\$160



**COLD STEEL CODE 4**

Few cutlery companies have a better reputation for testing their products before their release to the public than Cold Steel. The Code 4 series is a great example of this. Available in either clip, tanto or spear points, with or without serrations, the folder was designed at the request of law enforcement for a strong but lightweight duty knife to carry on their everyday belt loadout. (coldsteel.com; 800-255-4716)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.5 inches
WEIGHT:	4.3 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	USA CTS XHP
HANDLE:	6061 aluminum
CLIP:	Reversible
MSRP:	\$135



**COMBATIVE EDGE M1-A**

Rob Walker has a well-established reputation as a close-combat instructor, and his knife designs reflect this expertise. While the M1 model has been around for a while, Walker recently kicked things up a notch by offering an automatic version of the knife with a 3.75-inch blade made of S30V steel. Only law enforcement and military personnel can get this one, though. (484-947-2656; combativeedge.com)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.75 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.88 inches
WEIGHT:	7.5 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	S30V
HANDLE:	Titanium
CLIP:	Tip up/down, right hand
MSRP:	\$489



**CRKT M16-14SFG**

The late Army First Sergeant (retired) Kit Carson designed an entire family of tactical folders for Columbia River Knife & Tool (CRKT), with the M16 group being one of the most popular. From photos I've seen from combat zones, the M16-14DSFG model, with its 3.880-inch, 8Cr14MoV steel blade, lives up to its name among the elite units serving in the field. (crkt.com; 800-891-3100)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.88 inches
OA LENGTH:	9.25 inches
WEIGHT:	5.9 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	8Cr14MoV
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up/down, four-position
MSRP:	\$100



# BCM GUN FIGHTER™



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Pistol Grip

- Reduced grip angle keeps wrist in line for improved trigger control
- Hinged Trap Door interior storage with water resistant rubber gasket
- Mod 0 similar to A1/A2 backstrap, Mod 1 with high rise backstrap
- Mod 2 up to 1/4 inch wider with interchangeable backstraps/inserts
- Mod 3 up to 1/4 inch wider with high rise backstrap/extended insert
- All Mods available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green, Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER Pistol Grips . . . . Prices start at \$17.95**



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Stock

- Over a year in design, specifically engineered geometry, with no weak links. New patent pending latch reinvents the interface with the receiver extension, providing superior strength.
- Simple modular, snag free design utilizes only 5 parts and 1 screw
  - 2 ambidextrous sling mounting options including QD swivel socket
  - Color matched rubber buttpad for secure shoulder placement
  - Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER Stock . . . . . \$55.95**



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Vertical Grip

- Forward angle increases rigidity of the forearm, provides more natural wrist angle
- Featuring an aggressive texture, and generous storage volume
- Cross bolt designed to work with improvised tools
- Reversible clamp for fastener setup on either side
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER VG - Screw Mount . . . . \$39.95**



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ Vertical Grip - Short

- Low-profile length for increased mobility and decreased "snag" factor
- Forward angle increases rigidity of the forearm, provides more natural wrist angle
- Aggressive texture, generous storage volume
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-S - Short, Screw Mount Version . . . . . \$35.95**

**BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-S-KM - Short, KeyMod Version . . . . . \$39.95**



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ VG

- Low-profile length for increased mobility and decreased "snag" factor
- The forward angle increases the rigidity of the forearm, while providing a more natural wrist angle
- Can be mounted in reverse angle to increase control when grabbing handguard and grip
- Flat sides with aggressive texture give better control to the shooter
- Anchor and bolt system offers a simple robust design, while maintaining a light-weight 1.9 ounces
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-KM-MOD-3 - KeyMod Version . . . . . \$18.95**

**BCMGUNFIGHTER VG-1913-MOD-3 - Picatinny Rail Version . . \$19.95**



## BCMGUNFIGHTER™ KAG Kinesthetic Angled Grip

- Forward rake gives positive retention when using "C-clamp" method of handguard support, works as a rest for supported firing positions
- Slight angle without bulk adds just the right amount of strain relief to the wrist without substantially increasing the girth of the handguard
- Small profile, textured front and back for positive engagement
- Innovative patent pending attachment method allows for robust clamping and alignment with minimal hardware and accessory size
- Made in the U.S.A. from high quality, impact resistant polymers
- Available in Black, Flat Dark Earth, Foliage Green and Wolf Gray

**BCMGUNFIGHTER KAG-KM - KeyMod Version . . . . . \$18.95**

**BCMGUNFIGHTER KAG-1913 - Picatinny Rail Version . . . . . \$19.95**



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EMERSON PATRIOT

When it comes to having been there when terrorists met their end, few knives have more credentials than those made by Emerson. One of the more heavy-duty models to be introduced in recent times is the Patriot, a full-fledged folding fighter if there ever was one. It features a 3.9-inch, 154CM steel blade and a G10 handle. (emersonknives.com; 310-539-5633)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.9 inches
OA LENGTH:	9.15 inches
WEIGHT:	6.1 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	154CM
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up, right hand
MSRP:	\$260



GERBER PROPEL

Gerber has been a leader in tactical cutlery since the Vietnam days. One of its more recent introductions in the field is the Propel folding tanto in a choice of either full-auto or assisted-opening versions with 3.5-inch blades of S30V or 420HC steel. (gerbergear.com; 800-950-6161)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.52 inches
WEIGHT:	4.28 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	S30V or 420HC
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up/down, right hand; tip down, left hand
MSRP:	\$146-\$189



HOGUE EX-01

A few years ago, Hogue teamed up with custom knifemaker Allen Elisewitz to create an entirely new line of tactical folders and fixed blades. A great example of the talents Allen brought to the table is the EX-01 tactical tanto, which sports a 3.5-inch, 154CM steel blade and G10 handle scales with texturing for a sure grip in any condition. (hogueinc.com; 800-438-4747)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	8 inches
WEIGHT:	4.04 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	154CM
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up/down, right hand
MSRP:	\$220



PRO-TECH LES GEORGE ROCKEYE AUTO

Retired Marine Les George has partnered up with Pro-Tech knives to offer the Rockeye line of both tactical folders and fixed blades. The folders, with their 3.38-inch blades, are available in a variety of handle finishes and materials as well automatic or manual opening systems. (protechknives.com; 562-860-0678)

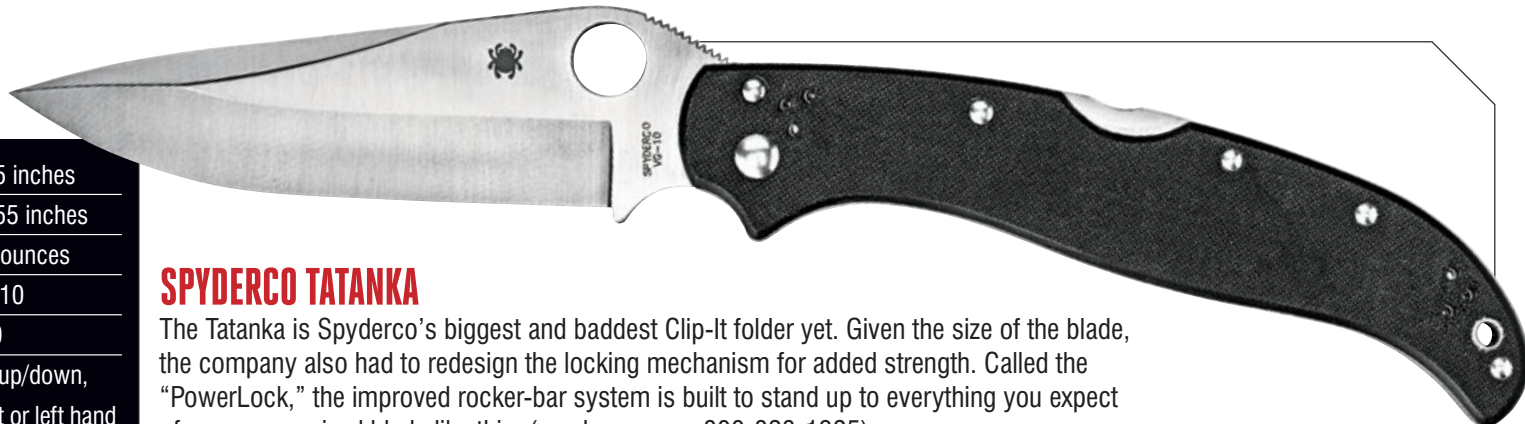
BLADE LENGTH:	3.38 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.38 inches
WEIGHT:	5.01 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	D2
HANDLE:	Aluminum
CLIP:	Tip up, right hand
MSRP:	\$280



SPARTAN AKRIBIS

Few knife-making companies can match the real-life special operations background as the guys at Spartan Blades. Curtis Iovito and Mark Carey have been there and done that three times over, so when they design a knife, you know it comes from practical experience. The company's Akribis folder is great example of this. (spartanbladesusa.com; 910-757-0035)

BLADE LENGTH:	3.5 inches
OA LENGTH:	8.5 inches
WEIGHT:	5.02 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	S35VN
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up, right hand
MSRP:	\$445



SPYDERCO TATANKA

The Tatanka is Spyderco's biggest and baddest Clip-It folder yet. Given the size of the blade, the company also had to redesign the locking mechanism for added strength. Called the "PowerLock," the improved rocker-bar system is built to stand up to everything you expect of a magnum-sized blade like this. (spyderco.com; 800-828-1925)

BLADE LENGTH:	5.05 inches
OA LENGTH:	11.55 inches
WEIGHT:	9.2 ounces
BLADE STEEL:	VG-10
HANDLE:	G10
CLIP:	Tip up/down, right or left hand
MSRP:	\$320



# LEGEND REFINED

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LIGHTER THAN EVER.  
ENHANCED PRECISION.

## SUPPRESSOR CAPABLE .50 BMG



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### SOG TRIDENT ELITE TANTO

Long the maker of some of the favorite cutting tools used by SEALs, SOG has added a tanto-point version of its Trident Elite assisted-opening folder series. The folder has an excellent main blade as well as a built-in strap-cutter on the handle and a small prying point on the butt. (sognives.com; 888-405-6433)

<b>BLADE LENGTH:</b>	3.7 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	8.7 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	4.4 ounces
<b>BLADE STEEL:</b>	AUS-8
<b>HANDLE:</b>	Glass-reinforced nylon
<b>CLIP:</b>	Tip up, right hand
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$96



### TIMBERLINE TACTICAL SOC

Timberline's Tactical SOC folder was designed to provide a tough-as-nails everyday work knife of practical size at an affordable cost. It is available in a variety of colors, including coyote brown. There are also partially serrated or straight edge options in each blade finish. (gatkosharpeners.com; 800-548-7427)

<b>BLADE LENGTH:</b>	3.25 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	7.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	5.0 ounces
<b>BLADE STEEL:</b>	440
<b>HANDLE:</b>	G10
<b>CLIP:</b>	Tip up, right or left hand
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$40



### TOPS MIL-SPIE 3.5 TANTO

While the company is better known for its heavy-duty, fixed-blade combat and survival knives, TOPS Tactical also produces a few very functional folders, too. The combat-ready and easy-to-carry MIL-SPIE 3.5 Tanto is great example of this, with its 3.5-inch, N690Co steel blade. (topsknives.com; 208-542-0113)

<b>BLADE LENGTH:</b>	3.5 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	8 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	4 ounces
<b>BLADE STEEL:</b>	N690Co
<b>HANDLE:</b>	6061 aluminum
<b>CLIP:</b>	Tip up, right hand
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$210

## IWI TAVOR TACTICAL COMBAT KNIFE

Given that the IWI Tavor SAR bullpup rifle is one of the most advanced shoulder-fired weapons currently available, you would expect any knife carrying the same name to be equally well designed. IWI chose the Pennsylvania-based company Guardian Tactical to actually produce its state-of-the-art Tavor combat folder. Guardian has been turning out its own line of mil-spec knives for several years and has received favorable reviews from many users going into harm's way.

The Tavor Tactical Combat Knife features both ambidextrous thumb/blade stop pegs and a spine-mounted "flipper" for one-handed opening. While blade flippers are not that rare, this one is assisted by 16 ball bearings in the pivot area of the blade. Opening the knife is as smooth as silk and as fast as lightening with either hand. The point on the Tavor is what might be called a hybrid between a drop and the classic Americanized tanto. This in turn was originally taken from a traditional Japanese sword point by the late Bob Lum several decades ago. Advocates believe it provides both strength and ease of penetration in one package.

**IN THE FIELD:** I found the handle frame very comfortable for heavy-duty cutting chores. The knife does ride a little higher in the pocket than some other models, which allows a fair amount of the handle to be exposed for quick deployment, but on the downside, it makes the knife a little less discreet.

The IWI Tavor rifle has quickly proven itself on some of the toughest urban battlefields of the world. This folding knife should find an equally well-respected place on the battle rattle of serious warriors everywhere. (iwi.us; 777-695-2081)



### ZERO TOLERANCE MODEL 0620

One of the big announcements for 2014 was that Zero Tolerance and Ernest Emerson had joined up to produce a line of tactical folders. Zero Tolerance blades have a reputation for being some of the toughest cutting tools on the market, and the new Model 0620 certainly lives up to that. (ztknives.com; 800-325-2891)

<b>BLADE LENGTH:</b>	3.6 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	8.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	6.4 ounces
<b>BLADE STEEL:</b>	Elmax
<b>HANDLE:</b>	G10/stone washed titanium
<b>CLIP:</b>	Tip up, right or left hand
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$250



# GET **FIXED** FOR COMBAT

**DEAD SET ON A FIXED BLADE? WE'VE GOT YOU COVERED!**

**O**f course, "tactical" doesn't necessarily mean that the knife has to fold. Throughout history, far more combat and survival knives have been fixed blades than folders. While folders do have their advantages, the traditional sheath knife has many equally strong points. The following are a few new models that have caught our eye in recent months.



## CONDOR FIDELIS

Much like the conventional wisdom with defensive handguns, the first rule of survival knives is having one with you when you actually need it. Neck knives are one of the more obvious means of ensuring you have a cutting tool when the balloon goes up. Condor Tool & Knife recently added an interesting example of this category to its lineup called the Fidelis. The 1075 carbon steel, 2<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>-inch-long, clip-point blade is mounted on a cord-wrapped handle and is carried in a Kydex sleeve with a neck chain. Its MSRP is \$30. (condortk.com; 407-905-0413)

## MONTIE GEAR ULTRALIGHT

Montie Gear's Ultralight should be the answer to every modern "techie's" dream knife. For starters, the ultra-thin, replaceable, 3.25-inch blade is made of CPM 3V steel with cutouts to lighten its weight. While stainless CPM S30V steel is more common these days, straight carbon 3V has a reputation for superior edge holding. The 4-inch handle of the knife is 6061 aluminum wrapped in a choice of colored nylon cords. The sheath is also 6061 aluminum with a MOLLE-compatible Blade-Tec belt clip on the backside and a handy thumb release along the upper spine. The knife and sheath weigh only 3.7 ounces. The MSRP is \$400. (montiegear.com; 800-722-7987)



## OUTDOOR EDGE SABERBACK+BRUSH DEMON

Outdoor Edge recently partnered up with well-known custom knifemaker Jerry Hossom to make production versions of several of his creative designs. New for 2015 is the SaberBack Bowie (far left), a trail knife with a 10.25-inch, 65Mn carbon spring steel blade, a rubberized handle and a nylon sheath. It weighs 13.5 ounces, and its suggested retail price is \$69. Also new is the Brush Demon machete for \$70 (left) sporting a (outdooredge.com; 800-447-3343)




## HALLMARK BAD BLOOD DECEPTER

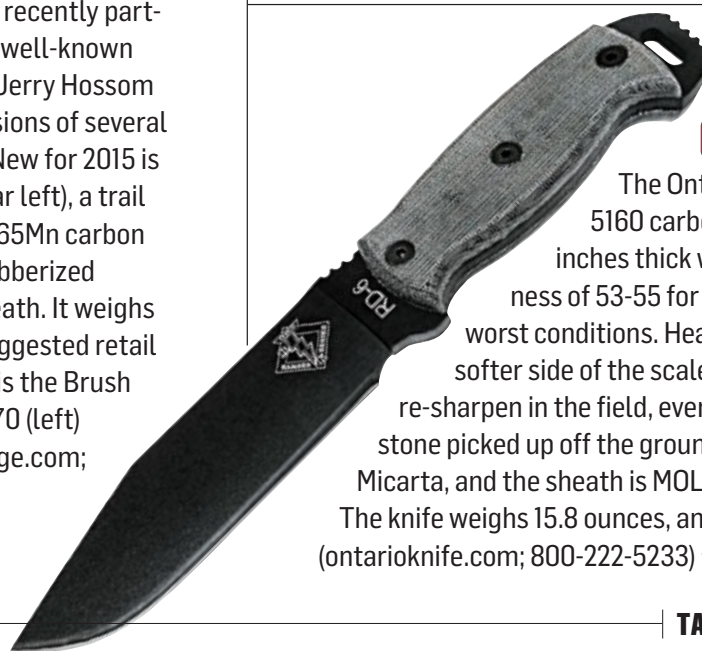
HallMark Cutlery's Bad Blood Knives are designed by custom knifemaker David Mosier to create some very practical but economical tactical blades in both folding and fixed persuasions. One model that caught my personal attention is the Deceiver, a sheath knife with a 4.5-inch, 8Cr14MoV stainless steel blade, a ridged G10 handle and a Kydex sheath. The spear-point blade lends itself to a wide variety of uses, including personal defense, and its 8.3-ounce weight makes it very comfortable to carry on a belt. Its MSRP is \$110. (hallmarkcutlery.com; 866-583-3912)



**OUTDOOR EDGE HARPOON** The Harpoon has a 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>-inch, 7Cr17 stainless blade with a paracord-wrapped handle. The knife changes easily from knife to harpoon by slotting a shaft with the sharp hawkbill end of the handle and tying the knife in or by threading the accessory blade holder onto a standard broom handle. The blade holder features a liquid-filled compass in the cap with a compartment for storing fish hooks, line, matches and other survival essentials. The Harpoon weighs 8.9 ounces. The MSRP is \$45. (outdooredge.com; 800-447-3343)

## ONTARIO RANGER RD-6

The Ontario Ranger RD-6's 5.5-inch, 5160 carbon steel blade is a full 0.25 inches thick with a low Rockwell hardness of 53-55 for extra toughness under the worst conditions. Heat treating this blade on the softer side of the scale also makes it easier to re-sharpen in the field, even if all you have is a smooth stone picked up off the ground. The handle is field-grade Micarta, and the sheath is MOLLE-compatible black nylon. The knife weighs 15.8 ounces, and its MSRP is \$115. (ontarioknife.com; 800-222-5233) 





# SIG SAUER

# M11-A1

# 9MM



BY LEROY THOMPSON



“As with every **SIG SAUER** pistol I can remember testing, its reliability has been excellent—100 percent so far without any cleaning.”



# *Trusted by elite military personnel,* upgraded to serve all CCW permit holders.

**W**hen the Beretta M9 was adopted in 1985, it was intended to replace a wide range of pistols and revolvers used by the U.S. armed forces. It did a good job of it, too, except that there remained a need for a more compact pistol to be carried by investigators from the Army CID, Navy NCIS and Air Force OSI, as well as some pilots and intelligence officers. Previously, most investigators had been armed with snub-nosed Colt or Smith & Wesson revolvers. A replacement would need to be in the now-standard 9x19mm NATO chambering and be more readily concealed than the M9. At least some consideration was given to adopting a more compact version of the Beretta 92 upon which the M9 is based, but instead the Sig Sauer P228 was adopted as the M11.

Although the M9 and M11 are considered the two standard U.S. military pistols, they are not the only ones that have been in service over the last two decades. U.S. Navy SEALs have used the P226 Navy model and more recently the MK25 version of the P226. The SEALs and other special operations units have also used the HK MK23 Mod 0 "Offensive" handgun. The MK23 retains the .45 ACP chambering of the Colt 1911, as do some 1911-type pistols adopted for the U.S. Marine Corps Special Operations Command (MARSOC) and Marine Expeditionary Unit Special Operations Capable (MEUSOC) personnel. Currently, Colt is producing the M45 CQBP (Close Quarter Battle Pistol) for Marine special operators. Special Forces operators have used an array of weapons, including Glock pistols.

**Sig Sauer's M11-A1 is a civilian version of the U.S. military's M11, complete with a Nitron-finished slide and corrosion-resistant parts.**

Steve Woods Photo



DoD Photo

## MILITARY M11s

That's some history, but let's get back to the M11. Investigators, military intelligence personnel and pilots all have a sound reason for needing a more compact pistol than the M9; hence, some aircrew are issued the M11. Aircrew are especially weight conscious, since they are limited to what they can carry on a survival vest. Since an M11 with one loaded magazine weighs 28.8 ounces while an M9 with one loaded magazine weighs 41.6 ounces, there is a real advantage for aircrew. Still, some aircrew are issued the M9 rather than the M11.

There also seems to be a certain status in being issued an M11. My military contacts tell me that some higher-ranking officers want an M11. Some female MPs with small hands and some female officers also seem to be authorized the M11 instead of the M9. SEALs and other special operators also use the M11 sometimes when they want a more concealable pistol. As of March 2003, various military investigative agencies had 5,317 in their armories, with at least some possibly being Sig Sauer P228s acquired before the deliveries of the M11 began.



## SIG SAUER M11-A1



### SIG FEATURES

- 1 3.9-inch barrel
- 2 SIGLITE front sight
- 3 Nitron-coated stainless steel slide
- 4 SIGLITE rear sight
- 5 Two-piece polymer grips
- 6 15-round double-stack magazine
- 7 Short Reset Trigger
- 8 Hardcoat anodized frame
- 9 Military-standard UID label

## SPEC BOX

### SIG SAUER M11-A1

<b>CALIBER:</b>	9mm
<b>BARREL:</b>	3.9 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	7.1 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	32 ounces (empty)
<b>GRIPS:</b>	Polymer
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	SIGLITE night
<b>ACTION:</b>	DA/SA
<b>FINISH:</b>	Nitron slide, black frame
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	15+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,149

Since the NCIS is a civilian investigative agency unlike the CID and OSI, they are not as wedded to military-issue weapons. As a result, in 2008 Sig Sauer announced that the NCIS would be acquiring .40-caliber P229s and P239s to replace their M11s. The U.S. Coast Guard also uses .40 P229s.

Contacts tell me that at least some units have ordered holsters for the M11 from various makers. However, the standard holster appears to be the GI M14 holster (NSN: 1095-01-338-4770). This is a forward-canted concealment holster with a retention snap. Flight crew survival vests have a built-in holster that will take an M9 or an M11. Generally, though, U.S. pilots are only issued a sidearm when flying in or near a combat zone.

The M11 is loaded with the same M882 ball ammo with 124-grain bullets as the M9. Although you will find differing sources on specifications for the M882 round, normally it is considered to be loaded at +P pressures and provides muzzle velocities between 1,150 and 1,200 fps.

### THE EVERYMAN'S M11

Now Sig Sauer offers the M11-A1, a civilian version of the military's M11. In simple terms the M11-A1 is an improved version of the original GI M11 that theoretically meets the basic "Technical Data Package" for the M11; however, I understand that as this is written M11-A1s are not being delivered to the armed forces. For the civilian shooter, though, the M11-A1 offers a chance to own a pistol that shares many features with the military-issued M11.

There are a lot of features to like on the M11-A1. For example, it has corrosion-resistant internal parts, as do the pistols Sig makes for the U.S. Navy SEALs. The slide also has Sig's Nitron finish, which I have found holds up quite well on the P226 I have carried quite a bit. As I understand



## SUPER SECRET SIG P229

### Sig Helps Celebrate USSS 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

In 1865, President Lincoln sat in Ford's Theatre to watch the hit production of "My American Cousin." On his desk sat a new law that would revolutionize law enforcement and help heal the nation. President Lincoln realized and created a Secret Service that could suppress a prolific problem—over 40 percent of currency was counterfeit. Of

course, the Secret Service would also go on to have the mission of protecting the President.

This year marks 150 years of Secret Service valor and history. To commemorate this, the Association of Former Agents of the U.S. Secret Service (AFAUSSS) has partnered with Sig Sauer to create a one-of-a-kind piece of history: a 150th Commemo-

rative Sig Sauer P229 in .357 SIG, which is the pistol that has been protecting Presidents since 2000.

Only available to members of the AFAUSSS, this Sig Sauer Custom Shop-produced P229 was designed to honor the legacy of all Secret Service personnel while being completely functional. This special-edition P229 has a black Nitron finish and SIGLITE tritium three-dot sights. The USSS "star" insignia is also laser-etched into both sides of the wraparound rosewood grip. Each pistol has its own unique serial number, starting with USSS0001. You'll find another USSS "star" on top of the slide, just ahead of the rear sight, while the right side of the slide says "1865 — U.S. Secret Service — 2015" and the left side bears the agency's motto, "Worthy of Trust and Confidence."

—Donald J. Mihalek



**"... Sig Sauer P229 in .357 SIG...the pistol that has been protecting Presidents since 2000."**



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## SIG SAUER M11-A1

it, Nitron is similar to what is known as a diamond-like carbon (DLC) finish. This is applied through PVD (Physical Vapor Deposition) and/or PA-CVD (Plasma Assisted Chemical Vapor Deposition), a process that increases wear resistance. The frame is hardcoat anodized. Another feature is the Short Reset Trigger, which makes it easier to engage multiple targets quickly.

I use the Double Action Kellerman (DAK) trigger system on a lot of my Sig Sauer pistols, but I have also used the conventional double-action/single-action (DA/SA) trigger system for years, so I don't mind that the M11-A1 uses this system, though it does make for a significant difference in the first-round DA pull and SA pull for subsequent rounds. I also like the SIGLITE night sights, as I use night sights on most of my pistols and am used to acquiring my targets in low light. The one problem with night sights in general, including the SIGLITEs, is that if they are off in elevation, it is necessary to track down the proper front sight post, which can be mastered with practice. I usually try to adjust by trying different loads until I find one that shoots to the point of impact.

An interesting feature present on the military M11s and retained on the M11-A1 is the military-standard unique identification (UID) label on the pistol's frame. It carries the manufacturer's code, weapon identification and serial number. Since I don't scan my weapons in and out of my armory, I find it an interesting cosmetic feature that gives the pistol more of a GI aura rather than a practical feature.

The M11-A1 has a lanyard ring. This is always a useful feature on a military pistol and would be especially so on a pistol used by aircrew or naval personnel, where retention could be an issue. More recently, the U.S. armed forces have been acquiring the M9A1, which has an accessory rail. The M11 does not have an accessory rail, nor does the M11-A1. This makes sense, as the M11 is intended as a concealment pistol rather than a "tactical" pistol.

One thing that should be borne in mind when evaluating the M11 pistol is that members of the OSI and CID have the

dignitary protection mission with generals and Department of Defense officials. The M11 offers a good compromise between compactness, magazine capacity and performance. Just as a side note, other federal agents with protective missions, such as the Department of State Security (DSS) and Secret Service, carry similar Sig Sauer pistols, though Secret Service P229s are chambered in .357 SIG.

### TEST FIRE

I've taken the M11-A1 to the range a couple of times now. I used mostly GI overrun 124-grain Winchester and Fed-



DoD Photo

To prepare for her role in the movie *Eagle Eye* as an OSI agent, actress Rosario Dawson trained with Air Force OSI personnel and learned to use their issued M11 pistols.

eral ammo, but also fired some CorBon rounds for groups because I normally find it especially accurate. At 25 yards, using CorBon 90-grain JHP loads, the M11-A1 shot a 49 out of 50 on a bullseye target with a group around 2 inches.

I've now taken the M11-A1 to the range twice and put 200 rounds of 124-grain NATO-spec ammo and 50 rounds of CorBon 90-grain JHP ammo through it. Next session I want to try it with CorBon 115- and 125-grain JHPs and Black Hills 115-grain JHPs. Overall, it has performed well. As with every Sig Sauer pistol I can remember testing, its reliability has been excellent—100 percent so far without any cleaning. The DA trigger pull is a bit heavy—10 pounds by factory specs—but it is smooth. According to the factory, the SA pull weight is 4.4 pounds, which allows for good accuracy downrange.

I'm a big fan of the entire Sig Sauer line of P220-based pistols, and the M11-A1 is no exception. And it allows civilian shooters to own a pistol close to the military's M11. It's a good, interesting, combat-ready pistol. For more information, visit sigsauer.com or call 603-610-3000. **TW**





## U.S. COLT DETECTIVE SPECIALS

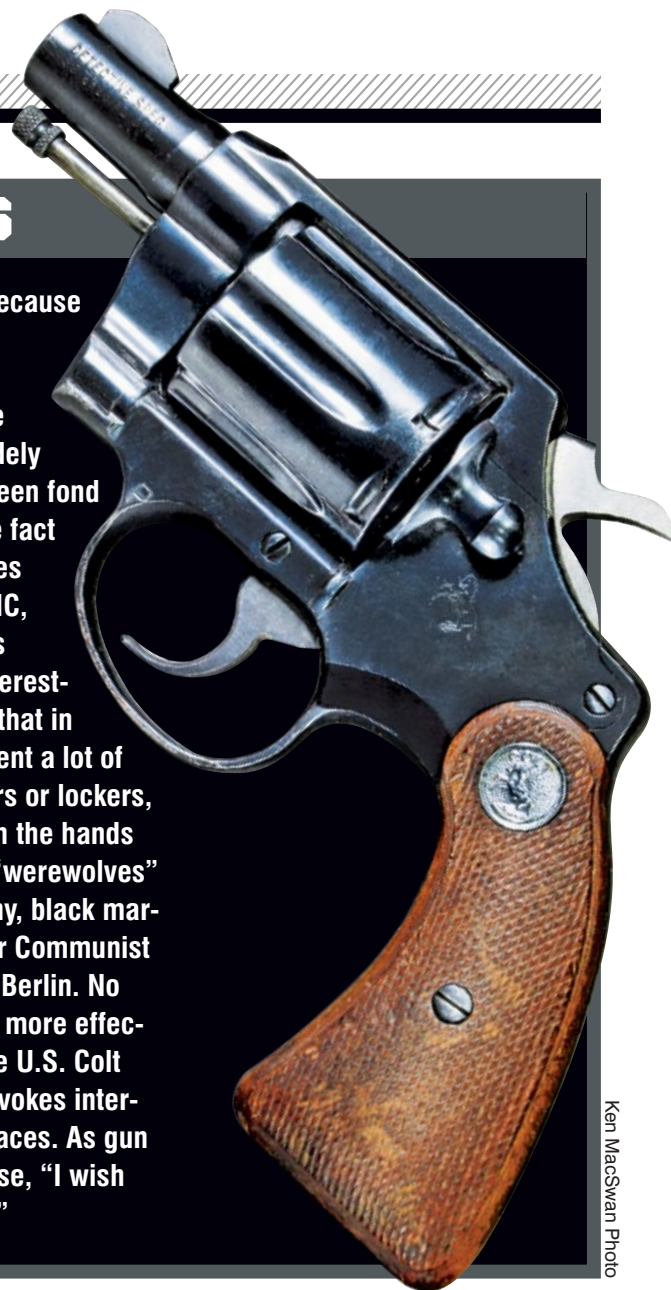
**P**rior to the adoption of the M11, military investigators carried various revolvers. The Naval Investigative Service (NIS), which was the military predecessor to NCIS until dissatisfaction with the “Tail Hook” investigation, among other reasons, led to the agency becoming civilianized. They carried a very neat Smith & Wesson Model 19 revolver with a round butt. Army CID agents carried the Colt Detective Special for many years, but I believe all of these had been replaced by 2-inch S&W M&P revolvers at the time of the switchover to the M11. Air Force OSI personnel carried S&W Chief’s Special revolvers with 3-inch barrels prior to the M11, but during the 1970s and 1980s, prior to the adoption of the M9 and then the M11, some OSI agents were issued

a chopped .45 fabricated by Air Force armorers from World War II 1911 or 1911A1 pistols.

**GI COLTS:** I’ve always found the Colt Detective Special snubbies carried by CID and CIC (Counter Intelligence Corps) agents especially interesting. The first military orders for the Detective Special were placed during WWII, when over 5,100 were ordered for military intelligence, OSS, CID and CIC. Some high-ranking officers used the Detective Special as well, including General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who turned one in when he retired from the Army.

Other than “U.S.” markings and, on WWII examples, an ordnance bomb marking, GI Detective Specials were just like the civilian versions—double-action, six-shot revolvers with 2-inch

barrels. Probably because I grew up watching 1930s and 1940s action shows where the Special was widely used, I’ve always been fond of this revolver. The fact that the military ones were used by the CIC, OSS and CID makes those especially interesting to me. I realize that in most cases they spent a lot of time in desk drawers or lockers, but I picture them in the hands of agents tracking “werewolves” in post-war Germany, black marketeers in Saigon or Communist agents in Cold War Berlin. No doubt, the M11 is a more effective weapon, but the U.S. Colt Detective Special evokes interesting times and places. As gun collectors often muse, “I wish that gun could talk.”



Ken MacSwan Photo

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# GEORGIA HEAT

An inside look at  
the lives and  
firepower of  
Marietta, Georgia's  
peacekeepers.

By Andre' M. Dall'au

To keep their high-risk entry skills sharp, Marietta SWAT operators train hard in realistic scenarios with Simunition-loaded pistols and breaching explosives.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The MPD has truly top-notch equipment, including Noveske N4 Light carbines with AAC suppressors, Streamlight TLR lights and Aimpoint sights.



**T**

## HE DRUG DEALER,

fleeing from a pursuing Marietta, Georgia, police officer, looked both menacing and scared as I stood in his escape route.

Moments earlier, police officers working on an active narcotics investigation witnessed this bad guy making a parking lot transaction with a passenger of a car. The officers subsequently pulled it over and found drugs in the passenger's possession. The now-penitent customer was handcuffed and placed on the curb of a nearby apartment complex.

Then the original drug dealer coincidentally walked up near the scene, breaking through some brush behind the apartment complex. He paused as he realized his error. He eyeballed the cops just as both of the Marietta Criminal Interdiction Unit (CIU) officers spotted him. He also knew that he was far enough away to evade the officers if he cut through the rear of the apartment complex. As he took off, Sergeant Liedke immediately gave chase while Officer Evan Waldrep maintained custody of the prisoner being held for felony possession.

Trying to help, I went over to an adjoining parking lot—just as the drug dealer was using it to escape to the street to get away. Except I was right in his path.

The MPD utilizes the latest technology, combined with superior training to produce a highly trained, effective, dedicated department.

## SOUTHERN ROOTS

That was just one day working with the Marietta Police Department (MPD), which is the law in Cobb County, Georgia, a suburban community just northwest of Atlanta, Georgia. The MPD deals with its 59,000 residents as well as hundreds of thousands of commuters and tourists traveling from Miami to Detroit and Chicago on Interstate 75 and Highway 41 daily.

Marietta is deeply steeped in southern history, as it was the starting place of what was called the "Great Locomotive Chase" during the Civil War, one of the first ever U.S. Army special operations. During this operation, Union agents tried to steal a Confederate train and cripple the southern rail system, resulting in one of the U.S. Army operators being awarded the very first Medal of Honor. Marietta was also the first stop during Sherman's "March to the Sea," where he burned most of the town before moving on to ravage many parts of southeastern Georgia.

**“Noveske Rifleworks make rifles for serious shooters who need to consistently make first-round hits when lives are on the line.”**





Marietta officers keep their edge with frequent training. SWAT snipers (left) make time to perfect their precision while patrol officers (right) hit the range with their Smith & Wesson 5.56mm M&P15 rifles.



“By a ratio of four to one, MPD officers have adopted the G42 as their preferred concealable backup weapon...”

MARIETTA’S WEAPONRY AT A GLANCE

	GLOCK 22 GEN4	GLOCK 42	GLOCK 43
CALIBER:	.40	.380 ACP	9mm
BARREL:	4.48 inches	3.25 inches	3.39 inches
OA LENGTH:	7.95 inches	5.94 inches	6.26 inches
WEIGHT:	25.59 ounces (empty)	13.76 ounces (empty)	17.95 ounces (empty)
GRIPS:	Polymer	Polymer	Polymer
SIGHTS:	Fixed	Fixed	Fixed
ACTION:	Safe Action	Safe Action	Safe Action
FINISH:	Matte black	Matte black	Matte black
CAPACITY:	15+1	6+1	6+1
	NOVESKE N4 LIGHT	REMINGTON 700P MLR	S&W M&P15 MOE
CALIBER:	5.56mm NATO	.338 Lapua Magnum	5.56mm NATO
BARREL:	10.5 inches	26 inches	16 inches
OA LENGTH:	25-35 inches	45.5 inches	33.75-37 inches
WEIGHT:	7.2 pounds (empty)	9 pounds (empty)	6.54 pounds (empty)
STOCK:	Magpul MOE	Synthetic	Magpul MOE
SIGHTS:	Aimpoint CompM4	Leupold Mark 4	A2 front, MBUS rear
ACTION:	Direct impingement semi-auto	Bolt	Direct impingement semi-auto
FINISH:	Matte black	Matte black	Matte black
CAPACITY:	30+1	4+1	30+1

Marietta is now a modern community, and it’s the also home of aircraft-maker Lockheed Martin. Marietta succeeds in blending its rich history and heritage with current technology and a supportive civil organization, which includes the one of the most innovative LE agencies in the country.

MEET THE MPD

Recognized by President Obama’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing as one of the top three in the nation, the MPD has 137 sworn officers who are divided into three different functional divisions. The Support Services Division manages administrative functions and training, while the Investigations Division is responsible for detectives and forensics. There’s also a K9 Division, and the Uniform Division consists of the CIU and uniformed patrol.

The MPD provides each officer with a primary patrol rifle, a Smith & Wesson M&P15 MOE carbine equipped with an Aimpoint CompM4 red-dot sight and a Streamlight TLR-1S light. Every sworn officer is also given at least two pistols: a powerful Glock 22 Gen4 in .40 S&W with a tactical light and their choice of a Glock 27 .40, a S&W Shield 9mm or the new Glock 42 .380 ACP for off-duty, backup and undercover work. By a ratio of four to one, MPD officers have adopted the G42 as their preferred concealable backup weapon. The G42 is chambered for the .380 ACP, which allows for a skinny frame and a smaller slide, with low-profile controls and sights to prevent snagging. With modern ammunition, the G42 gives MPD officers the last word to resolve a situation, usually very close and unexpected, when lives are at risk and their primary weapons are unavailable.

The MPD is also adopting the brand new, long-awaited, single-stack G43 9mm for its officers to carry in ankle holsters or in a custom kydex holster concealed on



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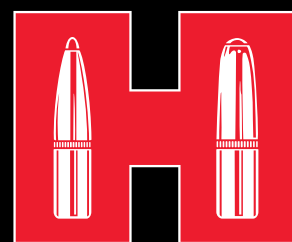
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Marietta SWAT officers train for every type of mission. Here they practice stacking near a door in a cramped hallway while the breacher uses a heavy ram to gain entry.

their duty vests. Barely larger than the G42, the G43 has the advantage of chambering the 9mm cartridge, probably the world's most popular pistol caliber. As Lieutenant Brian Marshall, the department armorer and head of the MPD's Firearms Training Unit, said, "The caliber debate is not about stopping power or potency, because it's a good thing to have any gun when your primary weapon is down or out of reach and the threat is still present. The G43 is small, lightweight, and it chambers the 9mm, which is less expensive and more plentiful than the .380 ACP. It is also a logical choice as we transition our primary issued duty pistol over to the G34 9mm tactical long slide."

It also helps that the G22 Gen4, G27, G42 and G43 have similar trigger pulls, sights and operating systems. Using one translates to trigger time with the other. This has already led to higher qualification scores for MPD officers. Some have even



used the Glock 42 to repeatedly hit steel targets at ranges from 100 to 120 yards, with one officer, Clay Culpepper, calling the G42 a "tack driver."

## LONG GUN STEEL

The Marietta SWAT team consists of 29 members who are divided into entry, perimeter and sniper elements, as well as some of the most qualified and trained medics in the country. In addition, most team mem-

bers are cross-trained for explosive breaching, mechanical breaching, sniper duties and team leadership so no operation is delayed due to a lack of a particular qualification on scene. MPD SWAT snipers use Remington Model 700 SPS Tactical rifles in 7.62mm NATO with AAC 762-SDN-6 sound suppressors, as well as 7.62mm H-S Precision bolt-action rifles and a Remington 700 Police MLR chambered in .338 Lapua Magnum and referred to as "Thor's Hammer," with an AAC Titan suppressor. All of the rifles are equipped with Leupold Mark 4 tactical riflescopes.

Noveske Rifleworks make rifles for serious shooters who need to consistently make first-round hits when lives are on the line. Based on that simple fact, the MPD has purchased 20 Noveske N4 Light carbines for the SWAT team's primary weapons. Each sports a low-profile gas block under a 10-inch, free-floating handguard with Picatinny rails, flip-up front and rear sights and an Aimpoint CompM4 red-dot sight. The N4 has a 10.5-inch, cold-hammer-forged barrel with a 1-in-7-inch twist rate to handle any 5.56mm bullet weight, and it has the Noveske Switchblock for manual gas regulation. The Switchblock



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As the author witnessed, the Crime Interdiction Unit's drug-sniffing K9s helped make four felony arrests in just one day.

is a barrel-mounted system that allows the operator to switch ports as needed to maintain reliability with or without a sound suppressor attached or to mitigate fouling during high use.

The MPD SWAT team uses AAC's M4-2000 and Mini4 suppressors for the N4. Why? Well, for one thing, they give the operator a great deal of audio relief in a tactical situation, making communications and voice commands feasible besides the tactical advantage of masking the team's sound signature.

#### IN THE WAY

The bad guy looked at me, obviously deciding whether he should go around me or through me, as I blocked his escape path. While I was probably not very intimidating, Officer Evan Waldrep has a very powerful presence. When he bellowed for the miscreant to stop after seeing him running towards me, the bad guy responded and (luckily for me) gave up the chase. Later, officers searched the drug dealer's car and apartment, uncovering plenty of drugs. My day with the CIU was very productive and successful, with four felony arrests.

Earlier in the day, a detained individual saw me and said, "You're going to learn today." After spending time with the MPD, that prediction turned out to be perfectly true. The officers of the MPD showed me that they know how to take on crime face-to-face so the bad guys learn that Marietta, Georgia, is not the place to commit crimes. The Marietta Police Department is as good as it gets in the Southeast. **TW**

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# THOR

## SEA WARRIOR

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■ BY PHILLIP NULL



**E**quipped with a remotely operated .50-caliber machine gun atop its cabin and four machine guns perched on its gunnels, CTruk Boats' Twin-Hulled Offshore Raider, or THOR, is armed far better than the superhero who shares the name. Based on a proven offshore vessel design, the THOR's 36-foot catamaran hull can not only mount the weapons needed for a fight, but it can also handle some of the worst conditions mother nature can produce. Whether delivering a platoon to a contested beach, performing force-protection missions in port or patrolling the rivers of the third world, the THOR is purpose-built for demand-

ing maritime missions in extremely hostile environments.

Designed and built by CTruk Boats, a company based in the United Kingdom, the THOR incorporates a range of high-tech equipment and features provided through the company's Collaborative Amphibious Project (CAP), a consortium of companies that joined forces to compete in a defense market dominated by larger corporations. Understanding the vessel's intended use in combat means the lives of her crew and the completion of critical missions hinges on its design, CTruk also established a military advisory panel with a collective 200 years of military experience to guide the development process and ensure the final product was fit for the task. The words "mission accomplished" best describe the results of these efforts.

### THOR'S ARMOR

At its base, the THOR is a high-speed small boat constructed of an advanced vacuum resin infusion composite that creates a smoother, more hydrodynamic shape than similar aluminum vessels. The material also serves to reduce the overall weight by up to 40 percent, which translates directly into a greater payload, range and speed. Custom naval armor by TenCate, which provides ballistic protection rated at NATO STANAG 4569 Level III, protects critical areas of the THOR's hull and superstructure. Equipped with this armor, the vessel's propulsion and navigation areas, and most importantly its crew, are shielded from 7.62x51mm AP rounds travelling at over 3,000 fps, grenade blasts and fragmentation, and mine explosions that might occur on contact with the hull. The glass windows of the cabin, necessary for visibility, would normally be the weak point in the armor strategy,

The CTruk THOR boasts twin 370-horsepower diesel engines, cutting-edge protection, five machine guns and much more.







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Photo: Wes Doss, Khejar Training

The all new AUG A3 M1 and the L9-A1 pistol, the perfect combination for sports shooters and law enforcement professionals, alike.



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The new multi-configurable AUG A3 M1 variant of the Steyr's venerable bullpup platform marks the introduction of MUD and the return of OD Green to its stock color options and adds new features like a front Quick-Disconnect Sling Swivel to classic characteristics like the quick-detach 16-inch barrel and battle-proven short-stroke gas-piston operation. It is available in Short-Rail, High-Rail and Integrated Optic versions with either a 1.5X or 3X scope. At 28.15 inches, Y SBR?



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## TACTICAL RIDES



### RIVERINE WARFARE

In the midst of the assault on Fallujah in April 2004, U.S. forces received reports of insurgent movement to and from the city via the adjacent Euphrates River. Fearing enemy forces could be bolstered with weapons and reinforcements from the maritime approaches, commanders called on the 2nd Marine Division's Small Craft Company to investigate and put a stop to any insurgent attempts to exploit the river.

**FULL-SPEED FIREFIGHT:** The Marines embarked on 39-foot riverine patrol craft, but shortly after reaching the



The SAAB Remote Weapons System on top of the boat allows a gunner to eliminate a threat without being exposed to enemy fire.

but all are clad in a polycarbonate, bullet-resistant glazing by Trend Marine Products, creating a 2-inch-thick protective barrier that can withstand fragmentation and up to five direct hits with 7.62mm rounds.

Powered by twin 370-horsepower Yanmar diesel engines and Rolls-Royce jet drives, the THOR is capable of speeds in excess of 40 knots and can operate in seas up to 8 feet without a degradation in performance. Shock-mitigating Scot Seats are installed for the crew and passengers to prevent injury and fatigue during high-speed and foul-weather operations. Navigation is accomplished with a KVH digital gyro-stabilized magnetic compass, a SharpEye solid-state radar and CPUPak navigation system with GPS anti-jamming technology. Every onboard electronic is integrated into an encrypted MACSYS information management system that provides real-time data to the crew, who monitor screens designated for their positions. To support varied mission requirements, the THOR's deck is reconfigurable with



**IRAQ 2007: Riverine Squadron on the move in Anbar Province.**



Following this incident, word spread among the insurgents to avoid the USMC boat crews, and reports of the river being used for enemy movements stopped entirely.

Building on this mission's success and several others, military riverine forces continue to play a role in conflicts throughout the world. The Coastal Riverine Force was created in 2012 by merging existing riverine and maritime security forces to create a unit capable of operating in what the U.S. Navy calls "green water" in conjunction with Amphibious Readiness Groups, Expeditionary Strike Groups, Carrier Strike Groups, Global Partnership Stations and Military Sealift Command ships.

city, their convoy was ambushed from enemy positions on shore. The Marines responded to the incoming fire by closing on the enemy positions at full

speed while opening up with all of their onboard weapons systems. The Marines' barrage quickly put a stop to the enemy action as they retreated further inland.

options including Force Protection, with a remote weapon system and multiple mounted automatic weapons; Troop Carrier, which maximizes the number of troops who can be transported to other vessels or to shore; and Riverine, a patrol configuration with propulsion system upgrades for greater speed and handling.

### SEA POWER

After its sleek hull design, the next thing you'll notice about the THOR is its armament. Mounted atop the cabin is a Saab Trackfire Remote Weapons System (RWS) with an integrated .50-caliber machine gun. Designed to allow target surveillance, tracking and engagement from a weapon

control station inside the vessel's armored cabin, the RWS eliminates any need for a gunner to expose himself to train and fire the weapon. From the RWS operator's console, the gunner commands the function of the heavy machine gun and the sensor module used to identify and sight-in on targets, both of which are mounted

## THE EXPERTS HAVE SPOKEN. **AGAIN.**



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<b>HULL TYPE:</b>	Catamaran
<b>CONSTRUCTION:</b>	Infused composites
<b>ENGINES:</b>	Twin 370 HP Yanmar marine diesel
<b>PROPULSION:</b>	Rolls-Royce water jet drives
<b>SPEED:</b>	40 knots
<b>DECK CONFIGURATIONS:</b>	Force Protection, Troop Carrier, Riverine
<b>ARMAMENT:</b>	Remote Weapon System (RWS), four mounted general-purpose machine guns

medium-caliber cannons and non-lethal weapons can be integrated into the RWS, which can also accommodate simultaneous mounting of varied weapon types for a graded effect. In addition to the RWS, the THOR can also carry four general-purpose machine guns on pintle mounts fitted on the boat's main deck for 360-degree weapon coverage.

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# SILENCE!

▶▶▶ **HAVE A QUIET RIOT.** Experience the enjoyable, discreet and safe way to send lead downrange.



**BY** FRED MASTISON

Today's sound suppressor market is booming with a vast array of offerings for rifle, handgun and even shotgun shooting enthusiasts.



**They are known by many names, including “silencers,” “suppressors,” “mufflers” and “cans.” Whatever their**

name, they are welcome additions to any firearm. For the purposes of this article, we will refer to these sound-limiting devices as “suppressors.” This is the best term because it’s a bit of a reach to imply that a firearm can be silenced. The sound of the shot may be dampened, but there is no way to completely eliminate all of the noise.

Hiram Percy Maxim invented the first firearm suppressor in 1910. Suppressors are designed to reduce and minimize the

sound created when the gases associated with firing a round expand. This is accomplished by forcing the gas through a specialized chamber inside the suppressor. The expansion chamber may contain a series of baffles or other chambers to re-route the gases, thereby reducing the sound when the gases leave the forward end of the suppressor. The other primary sound associated with a firearm is the sonic “crack.”

While there are a few integral suppressors that utilize ported barrels to bleed off propellant gas and thus reduce the velocity of the bullet, subsonic ammunition is suggested. Without subsonic ammunition, suppressors reduce the noise of firing by about 18 to 32 decibels depending on the design. According to the American

Silencer Association, “The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) states that the threshold for hearing-safe impulse noise is 140 decibels. Without hearing protection, exposure to any impulse noise over 140 decibels causes varying degrees of permanent hearing loss, which can also lead to tinnitus. Most well-engineered silencers take the decibel level of their host firearm below 140 decibels, making those silencers effective primary hearing safety devices.”

## SUPPRESSOR TYPES

There are two primary types of suppressors on the market: integral and muzzle mounted. Integral suppressors are incorporated into the design of the gun via the barrel. Essentially, the entire barrel is part of the suppression device. This is generally a permanent part of the firearm. Muzzle-mounted devices, on the other hand, are designed to be attached and removed at the discretion of the user. Mounting systems for muzzle-centric designs have seen some fantastic advances over the last several years. These include quick-detach, or QD, mounts that allow the suppressor to be put on and taken off very quickly.

There is generally a suppressor for every common flavor of ammunition on the market. The big players are the .22 LR, 9mm, .45 ACP, .223/5.56mm and .308/7.62mm. There are companies that will make suppressors for just about any weapon, including .50 BMG rifles. One overlooked perk of modern suppressors is their interchangeability. For example, most .30-caliber suppressors will also work on .223/5.56mm platforms with the correct attachment point. This “big fits small” is a general rule, but it is always wise to confirm with the manufacturer before trying this out for yourself. This is a big deal in the arena of cost because it allows you to potentially use one suppressor for more than one weapon system.

**“Modern suppressors, when mounted correctly, have little or no negative effect on your weapon’s accuracy.”**

Sean Utley Photo



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## SUPPRESSORS



The quietest combination tends to be a bolt-action rifle coupled with a well-made sound suppressor, allowing you to hit your target from afar without giving away your position.

### CAN-DO FIREPOWER

The primary benefit of a suppressor is sound reduction. This benefit applies across a broad spectrum ranging from tactical applications to helping new shooters. Suppressors also act like muzzle brakes in that they can reduce felt recoil by as much as 30 percent. The reduction of painful muzzle blast is helpful, as new shooters using unsuppressed weapons tend to flinch with every shot. Additionally, the sound suppressor acts as a natural flash suppressor, which allows for better low-light shooting.

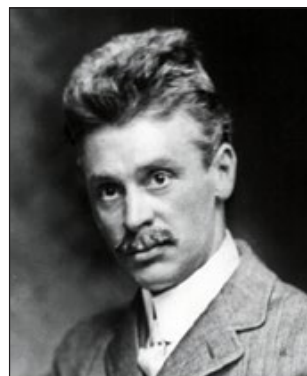
Modern suppressors, when mounted correctly, have little or no negative effect on your weapon's accuracy. This is different from what is called a point-of-impact (POI) shift. A muzzle-mounted device will change the POI of any firearm it is attached to. This can be overcome, however, with testing and knowing what the POI shift is when the sound suppressor is attached. Most serious sound suppressor users keep actual data on their weapon's POI shift with the suppressors they use, and they'll change their optics accordingly.

Modern suppressors are also well made and require little maintenance. Several .22 LR suppressors, as well as some pistol cans, are designed to be disassembled for cleaning and maintenance. A majority of them, though, can just be shaken vertically, muzzle down, to free any carbon chips or loose powder. Treating them inside and out with a light coating of oil is always a good call. The lifespan of a suppressor is dependent upon many factors, including the quality of the ammunition being used, your rate of fire and the material the suppressor is made from. Most companies can provide very general guides to the projected lifespans of their products.

### RIGHT SIDE OF THE LAW

As with anything related to the firearm world, there are specific laws covering purchasing and owning sound suppressors. According to the American Suppressor Association, suppressors are regulated under the National Firearms Act (NFA) of 1934, which falls under the purview of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (BATFE). To legally purchase or possess a suppressor you must:

- Be at least 21 years of age to purchase a suppressor from a dealer
- Be at least 18 years of age to purchase a suppressor from an individual (contingent on state laws)
- Be at least 18 years of age to possess a suppressor as a beneficiary of a trust or as a member of a corporation (contingent on state laws)
- Be a resident of the United States
- Be legally eligible to purchase a firearm



**Hiram Percy Maxim, the son of the Maxim machine gun's inventor, created the first sound suppressor in 1910.**

- Pass a BATFE background check with a typical processing time somewhere between 4 to 9 months
- Pay a one-time \$200 transfer tax
- Reside in one of the 39 states that currently allows civilian ownership of sound suppressors.

While at first glance this may seem overwhelming, it is a fairly simple process. By working with a professional dealer, you can easily navigate through these guidelines.

Suppressors have been the focal point of countless spy movies and TV shows. While most of that action is exaggerated, it's hard to deny the appeal of today's sound suppressors. With their many benefits, they are easily some of the best investments serious shooters can make. ▶▶▶▶



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# THE CAN COLLECTION



The hot list of cutting-edge sound suppressors on the market for today's savvy gunners.

BY ANDY MASSIMILIAN



## ● AAC ILLUSION 9

The Illusion 9 from Advanced Armament Corporation (AAC) is based on the company's Evolution 9mm suppressor. It was designed to be low enough to allow for the use of factory-height sights. This unit is user serviceable. It is constructed with seven stainless steel conical baffles and a titanium body with a hardcoat anodized finish. The Illusion is 7.88 inches long, 1.25 inches in diameter, weighs 10.4 ounces and has a rated sound reduction of 33 decibels. ([advanced-armament.com](http://advanced-armament.com); 770-925-9988.

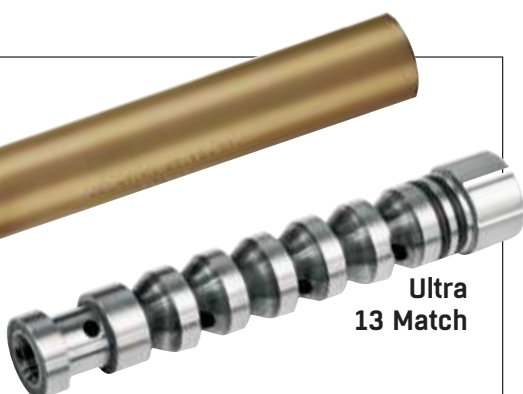


## ● AAC TI-RANT 45M

AAC's Ti-RANT 45M is modular and can be configured into either a short or long unit. The suppressor disassembles for cleaning by removing a modular section containing three baffles. In the long incarnation, the unit is 8.74 inches long and weighs 13 ounces while the short version is 6.75 inches and 11.3 ounces. The suppressor reduces the sound signature (while

dry) by 30 and 18 decibels for the full and short configurations, respectively. The Ti-RANT 45M is made with a stainless steel blast

baffle, anodized aluminum secondary baffles and a titanium tube and end cap. The Ti-RANT 45M's 1.375-inch-diameter tube is finished with durable Cerakote. ([advanced-armament.com](http://advanced-armament.com); 770-925-9988)



Ultra  
13 Match

Marauder

## ● AWC ULTRA 13 MATCH

AWC is one of the oldest suppressor manufacturers, and it now offers over 20 suppressors for pistol, rifles and submachine guns. New for 2015 are the Marauder quick-disconnect rifle suppressor and several improved integral suppressors for the Ruger Mark III and Browning Buck Mark pistols as well as Ruger's 10/22 and 77/44 rifles. Another addition to AWC's lineup is the Ultra 13 Match, an integrally suppressed .22 LR rifle. The Ultra 13 Match resembles a 10/22 but is actually a Primary Weapons Systems Summit receiver with a Hogue stock and a 16.5-inch Shaw match barrel. ([awcsilencers.com](http://awcsilencers.com); 800-401-7269)

## ● BLACK RAIN ORDNANCE

Black Rain Ordnance's suppressors feature Epsilon baffles, which deliver outstanding performance, sound reduction and accuracy, all with low heat gain. The Aris .223 is rated for .17 HMR to .22-250, for both rifles and pistols, including full-auto use.

The M30-A is well balanced for handling 6mm and 6.5mm cartridges as well as rounds ranging from the 300 BLK to the .300 Win Mag, delivering exceptional sound and recoil reduction. This can weighs 28 ounces and sports a black salt-bath nitride finish.

Finally there is the .22 Universal Rimfire. This is one of the most durable rimfire suppressors on the market, and it comes in a package designed to handle all the rounds and abuse you can deliver. Full stainless steel construction means the Universal won't rust or get damaged by cleaning solutions that other aluminum cans can't handle.

([blackrainordnance.com](http://blackrainordnance.com); 888-836-2620)



**FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:** Black Rain Ordnance's Aris .223, .22 Universal Rimfire and M30-A.



## ● DEAD AIR SILENCERS SANDMAN-L

Dead Air Silencers is a new name to the market, but it's certainly not inexperienced. Led by suppressor design veteran Mike Pappas, Dead Air makes extremely durable, high-performance suppressors. Its new 7.62mm Sandman-L is rated for up to .300 Win Mag use and is only 8.9 inches long and 1.5 inches wide but delivers a stated sound reduction of 31 decibels using 7.62mm NATO ammunition. This suppressor is tuned for low backpressure and has a removable end cap that acts as a flash suppressor. The Sandman-L mounts to Dead Air's nitride-finished stainless steel muzzle brake. Alignment, attachment and gas seal are accomplished with a tapered cone with a secondary lug for additional securement. ([deadairsilencers.com](http://deadairsilencers.com); 877-892-7544)



## ● ELITEIRON CQC & DELTA

EliteIron's centerfire rifle suppressors are made with stainless steel tubes finished with Cerakote. The core is fully welded for structural strength and durability and made from stainless modified K baffles. For 5.56mm rifles, two models are offered that differ with respect to length and sound reduction. That includes the 5.35-inch, 14.5 oz., full-auto-rated CQC (33 decibel reduction) and the 6.5-inch CQC Elite (34 decibel reduction). The third is the direct-thread mount 7.5-inch, 21 oz. Delta (35 decibel reduction). All three have 1.5-inch diameter tubes and 1/2x28 threads. Buyers of the CQC and CQC Elite also get a 1/2x28 threaded muzzle brake and a cap that redirects blast and sound away at close quarters when the rifle is unsuppressed. ([eliteiron.com](http://eliteiron.com); 406-244-0234)



## ● GEMTECH GTSOC PRO

Gemtech partnered with Kimber to produce a highly specialized 1911 and suppressor combo kit that uses. The GTSOC kit comes with a Kimber custom 1911 pistol, a Gemtech GM-45 sound suppressor, three magazines and an APL Inforce weapon light—all in a custom fitted nylon case. The GM-45 suppressor included in the GTSOC kit is 6.2 inches long without the piston and 1.25 inches in diameter, and it weighs only 5.5 ounces without the piston due to its 7075-T6 aluminum construction. The Gemtech GM-45 is rated for fully automatic firing. It's also completely finished in durable Cerakote and uses a G-Core Monocore. Finally, the GM-45 suppressor has a stated dry/wet sound reduction of 23/35 decibels. ([gem-tech.com](http://gem-tech.com); 208-939-7222)



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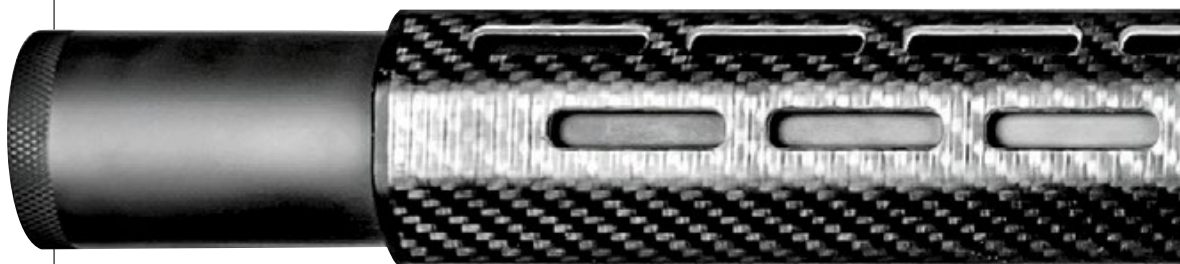
## ◉ GEMTECH'S "THE ONE"

Tested to USSOCOM standards, Gemtech's new "The One" suppressor handles several calibers. It is full-auto rated in 10-inch or longer barrels in 5.56mm NATO, semi-auto in 16-inch or longer barrels in 7.62mm NATO and 24-inch barrels in .300 Winchester Magnum. The One is made with an Inconel Blast Baffle and a titanium tube, and uses Gemtech's quick-attach mount. ([gem-tech.com](http://gem-tech.com); 208-939-7222)



## ◉ LIBERTY SUPPRESSORS

Liberty Suppressors makes several muzzle-mounted and integral suppressors, including those used in the Rhino Arms family of precision rifles, such as the RA-4R ISR, which is an AR-15-style short-barreled rifle (SBR) chambered in the increasingly popular 300 Blackout. The Liberty suppressor equipped on the ISR, with its titanium monocoire, is permanently attached to the SBR's short 7.5-inch barrel for an overall length of 16.1 inches, thus it is subject to only one NFA transfer tax. ([libertycans.net](http://libertycans.net); 706-661-6911)



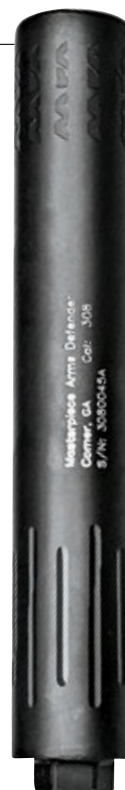
## ◉ SIG SAUER SRD762-QD

The Sig Sauer SRD762-QD silencer is only 7 inches long and 1.625 inches wide and weighs 17 ounces. It is rated for the 7.62mm NATO, 300 BLK and .300 Win Mag. Made from stainless steel and nickel alloy, the baffles on this suppressor are welded together in a stack without an additional tube to save weight and cost, and they have a PVD finish. Just as unusual, however, is Sig's unique modular Taper-Lok fast-attach mount that is included with the suppressor. (Most companies sell the required mount separately.) The Taper-Lok mount allows the user to easily set the position of the muzzle brake or flash suppressor with a crush washer. There are no mechanical teeth or ratchet system to wear out, and removing the suppressor is done by hand, though the suppressor has wrench flats if required. ([sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com); 603-610-3000)



## ◉ MASTERPIECE ARMS 308S

MasterPiece Arms makes semi-automatic pistols and rifles and five different suppressors for .22 LR, 9mm, 5.56mm NATO and .308 Winchester firearms. The MPA 308S is made for .308 Winchester and 300 Blackout rifles with threaded barrels. It is a monocoire design that uses 17-4 stainless steel for the core and 304L stainless for the tube and end cap. The unit is finished with Cerakote. The MPA 308S is 1.5 inches in diameter, 9.3 inches long and weighs 23 ounces. ([masterpiecearms.com](http://masterpiecearms.com); 770-832-9430)



## ◉ SUREFIRE RYDER 9-TI

SureFire's Ryder 9-Ti is 7.6 inches long and weighs 9.1 ounces with the piston. At only 1.25 inches wide, no special high-profile sights are needed on the host pistol. The Ryder 9-Ti uses a titanium tube and end caps coated in grey, black or Flat Dark Earth Cerakote. Inside, there are five heat-treated stainless steel baffles and one spacer that are numbered and notched for correct and quick reassembly after cleaning. The Ryder 9-Ti is sold with an assembly/disassembly tool that easily removes and reinstalls the baffles as a single-stacked unit. ([surefire.com](http://surefire.com); 800-828-8809)



## ◉ STEALTH ENGINEERING GROUP

Stealth Engineering Group (SEG) is a new company that makes four suppressor models that can be custom configured to the user's specifications. All four models use monocoire baffles, and both the core and the tube can be made with any combination of aluminum, stainless steel or titanium. Customers can also order suppressors in a wide variety of calibers and several finishes. Customers who select a titanium tube have an unusual variety of optional finishes, including camo, rings and a swirl pattern. The four models range in size from the Independent, which is 1 inch in diameter and 6.125 inches long, to the Hancock model, which is 1.5 inches in diameter and 8.9 inches long. ([segsuppressors.com](http://segsuppressors.com))







### THUNDER BEAST ULTRA

Thunder Beast's new Ultra suppressors are designed for calibers up to .300 Win Mag and are made entirely of titanium with fully welded cores for strength. (Direct-thread models use a 17-4 stainless steel blast shield.) Ultra suppressors mount with direct threads or to the company's Compact Brake muzzle brake or flash suppressor. The CB mount uses a tapered cone to lock the suppressor to the mount. The mounting method (thread or CB) can also be changed by the factory without needing to buy an additional suppressor. Ultra cans are 1.5 inches in diameter and come in three lengths: 5, 7 or 9 inches. They weigh only 7.6 to 11.9 ounces with the CB mount and 9.4 to 13.7 ounces with direct-thread mounts. **(307-287-2052; thunderbeastarms.com)**

### WILSON COMBAT WHISPER

Best known for its very high-quality 1911 pistols, AR-15 rifles and customizations for Remington 870 shotguns, Wilson Combat recently introduced its first line of suppressors. The Whisper line is made of titanium and comes in one external size that can be configured into four different bore diameters: 9mm, 5.56mm, 7.62mm and 6.8mm. All Whisper suppressors use a monocoire design welded to a 6.3-inch-



long, 1.875-inch-diameter tube that weighs only 17.8 ounces. Whisper suppressors use a quick-attach mount to attach to a Wilson stainless steel and nitride-finished muzzle brake that is included with the suppressor. Suppressor tubes come standard with a bead-blasted finish with an optional heat-resistant Armor-Tuff coating in black, grey, OD, desert tan or Flat Dark Earth. **(wilsoncombat.com; 870-545-3618)**

### YANKEE HILL MACHINE SIDEWINDER

Yankee Hill Machine (YHM) makes rifle, pistol and sub-machinegun suppressors. For 2015, the company will offer the "Hearing Safe" Sidewinder suppressor in 9mm, .40 and .45 ACP. All Sidewinders are 1.375 inches in diameter but have different lengths depending on caliber: 7.8 inches for the 9mm, and 8.75 inches for the .40 and .45 ACP. Their construction is also consistent, with the monocoire baffle made from hardcoat anodized 7075-T6 aluminum and housed in a tube made from 6061-T6 aluminum. The booster assembly and mount are made from 17-4PH stainless steel. The Sidewinder can also be quickly disassembled for maintenance. All YHM suppressors come with a lifetime warranty. **(yhm.net; 877-892-6533)**



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# HIGH-TECH INTEL



An inside look at some tip-of-the-spear gizmos that are saving lives of the good guys!

## POINTMAN ROBOT

Bringing audio/visual capabilities to any high-risk SWAT entry.

BY DONALD J. MIHALEK

**O**n August 10, 2013, officers of the Bellevue, Nebraska, Police Department (BPD) responded to a report of an unstable man with a gun. When officers arrived on the scene and approached the house, the man fired at them. The officers retreated and set up a perimeter to contain the threat. The SWAT team responded and took over the scene. Even with guns and armor, their most powerful weapon was less than 7 inches tall.

The one thing always lacking in these situations is real-time intelligence. Without someone on the inside or a pre-positioned security camera, the SWAT team is working blindly. Faced with this dilemma, the Bellevue SWAT team brought along the answer: a Pointman tactical robot from Applied Research Associates (ARA).

"Had we not deployed the Pointman robot, there is a good chance we would have had SWAT officers much closer to that doorway and possibly in harm's way," said Dave Stukenholtz of the BPD.



The rugged Pointman tactical robot lets operators capture footage inside a high-risk area for mission-critical, lifesaving intelligence.

**LEADING THE WAY:** Traditionally, the pointman is the lead element of a tactical team—perhaps one of the most important positions. ARA's Pointman tactical robot was developed to give "those in the field the ability to conduct much needed surveillance with minimal threat to the officers."

The Pointman is a compact, military-grade tactical robot that can provide real-time video surveillance of people, structures, perimeters and vehicles. It can be operated in urban, suburban, forest or desert environments—even underground.

It can also go over uneven surfaces and up slight inclines. The robot, classified as a small unmanned ground vehicle (SUGV), is designed for rapid deployment in any tactical situation. At 18

pounds, the Pointman weighs less than most ballistic shields. The Pointman is built rugged, so it can be pushed, dropped or tossed into whatever the situation demands. With its compact footprint and narrow width, it can operate in confined areas such as culverts, warehouses, residences, office spaces, buses and aircrafts.

The Pointman uses wheeled locomotion to quickly traverse level terrain and a unique flipping motion to self-right, negotiate obstacles and climb stairs. The Pointman is suitable for virtually any tactical environment and brings an important tactical tool to bear on any hazardous situation.

The robot is 19 inches wide, 13 inches long and 6.75 inches tall. Its driving speed is 5 feet per second. It can climb at 2 seconds per step and has a battery life of five to six hours under typical operating conditions. The robot's charging system is compatible with all vehicle or wall outlets. It's also water resistant and made from materials that can be decontaminated.

The Pointman works off of a radio control signal. If an agency decides to buy a Pointman, they will have to choose between an analog or digital COFDM model. That decision will be based on an agency's budget and range needs. The digital unit offers greater range and signal

The Pointman's radio controller gives the operator an optimal field of view and precise controls for maneuvering the robot in any area.





quality, especially in high-interference environments. The Pointman can also be equipped with a one-way audio capability, so an operator can both see and hear what is going on around the Pointman. If necessary, the Pointman can also be equipped with add-ons such as antennas for improved reception from inside armored vehicles, equipment mounts for disrupters and DVRs for recording evidence.

The robot uses a camera on a boom that can be moved into several different positions for monitoring close-quarters areas. Its assembly can lie flat for inspections under vehicles or can be raised to see over obstacles or around corners. The camera on the Pointman provides daylight, low-light and infrared video in a highly mobile platform. An integrated, high-intensity headlight ensures that you can see video no matter the amount of light. The Pointman's controller also has a video output jack that can be plugged into external monitors, allowing others to collect evidence and see exactly what the Pointman robot is seeing.

**POINTMAN UNDER FIRE:** In Bellevue, Nebraska, the SWAT team navigated its Pointman tactical robot into a position inside the suspect's garage to monitor the exit and launch into hours' long negotiations with the suspect.

During that period, the officer in control of the Pointman saw the suspect emerge from the house and attempt to close the garage door. The suspect was holding his shotgun and proceeded to fire four 12-gauge rounds at the robot—shots that could have killed a police officer. Eventually, the Bellevue SWAT team launched tear gas into the suspect's house and he eventually surrendered.

Despite being hit and disabled, the Pointman still monitored and relayed critical information concerning the location and disposition of the suspect to the SWAT officers. The Pointman was repaired in less than a month and is back on duty as I write this.

Over 50 Pointman tactical robots are deployed with federal, state and local first-response teams across the United States. They have proven their weight in gold and are a valuable additional tool to any agency. If you are going to handle a dynamic and potentially fatal situation, it's always good to go in with a reliable Pointman. For more information, visit [forcepro.ara.com](http://forcepro.ara.com) or call 802-728-4588.

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## ON-PERSON VIDEO CAMS

Back up your cruiser's dashcam with these next-gen situation-capturing systems.

BY NICK JACOBELLIS

Anyone who has ever served in a sworn law enforcement position who has been suspected or accused of any form of misconduct, violating agency policy and/or the law knows that there are times when it is your word against the word of others, including a prisoner, an angry motorist, the subject of a criminal investigation, an informant or a "witness" who may or may not have actually observed the incident in question in its entirety. In other situations, you can become the subject of an internal affairs investigation because you took action that needs to be investigated for various legitimate reasons. This includes being investigated for using different levels of force. Think about the recent headlines out of Ferguson, Missouri, and Baltimore, Maryland.

Starting in 2007, some government agencies, including police and sheriff's



Phoenix, Arizona, police officers are now wearing VIEVU body cameras on duty to capture all suspect interactions, which has helped build stronger ties with the community.

departments, began using wearable body cameras. These cameras allow law enforcement officers to establish a video record with sound that documents events that occur in the immediate presence of the officer during the performance of their official duties. The Phoenix, Arizona, Police

Department (PPD) recently began testing the use of VIEVU body-worn cameras with its sworn personnel.

**THE VIEVU FROM HERE:** VIEVU body-worn video cameras are compact and lightweight recording devices that are equipped with a

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“VIEVU body-worn cameras are currently being used by over 4,000 law enforcement agencies in 17 countries.”

sliding on/off button and HD or SD resolutions. When a law enforcement agency adopts the VIEVU system, they end up with what can best be described as a “package deal.” This package includes the “hardware,” or the actual camera, as well as the VERIPATROL video-management software and a comprehensive system of technical support. This technical support includes the storage, retrieval, transcription services and management oversight as well as a monitoring capability of captured-video evidence that cannot be tampered with by anyone in the chain of command, from the officer in the field to the agency administrator.

VIEVU also offers a transcription service with its technical support services. As far as costs are concerned, VIEVU has payment plan that allows government agencies to adopt its body-worn video system for \$25 per month per camera. A new plan called VIEVU Solution is \$55 per month per camera, and includes access to the CJIS-compliant Microsoft Azure Government Cloud software program.

**PHOENIX HEAT:** As documented by Commander Kurtenbach in the Smart Policing Initiative, the decision to field test the concept of using a body-worn camera came about because the Phoenix Police Department, in conjunction with the City Manager’s Office, established a task force in April of 2010 to investigate ways to improve the relationship between the police and the community.

In May of 2014, I visited the Maryvale Precinct in Phoenix, Arizona, to examine the use of the VIEVU body-worn camera by patrol personnel. The Maryvale Precinct is 15 square miles in size and consists of some 115,000 residents. Approximately 100 sworn officers are currently assigned to the Maryvale Precinct, which is one of the most active commands in Phoenix. Phoenix is like other major cities where the police routinely respond to and investigate a wide variety of criminal activity. The domestic violence problem alone represents one of the top five calls that

— Continued on page 129

# Fulton Armory



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# TAKING THE .308 TO 1,000



**When I started shooting competitively in F-T/R class matches back in 2010, I did so with my Steyr SSG 08.** It may have lacked muzzle velocity, but it was so accurate that I could hit targets at 1,000 yards without any problems. Or so I thought.

Yes, you can use a factory .308 Winchester sniper rifle as well as factory match-grade ammunition out to 1,000 yards and perform superbly, but other shooters will probably still do better than you. Why? Because they have longer, heavier barrels and hot handloads designed for their rifles' tight match chambers.

After a couple of seasons learning the tricks of F-Class shooting, I packed up my short-barreled Steyr and decided to build a rifle dedicated to competition—one that could push the .308 Winchester to its limits.

## STRONG FOUNDATION

There are many good actions for a .308 Winchester-sized bolt, but very few have the straightness, stiffness and massive three-lug design of Barnard Precision's Models S and P actions. I planned to go all out on the barrel for this rifle, so I opted for the slightly smaller and lighter Barnard Model S action, which would fit any Remington 700-style stock with minor fitting.


The Barnard S action can use any Remington-style trigger, and I quickly chose a Jewell unit to install. The Jewell BR700 is set at 3.5 ounces with no safety or bolt release, as the Barnard Model S action has its own. Adjusted to its maximum pull, the BR700 is perfect for my applications; it's a little heavy for Benchrest/target shooting standards, but it's ultra-light for a sniper like me that is used to shooting 3-pound military triggers. The BR700 is superb. It's very controllable without any creep.

**QUEST ACHIEVED:  
F-Class, single-shot  
.308 Win that  
outperforms a .300  
Win Mag rifle!**

**BY EDUARDO ABRIL DE FONTCUBERTA**

• J.J. TERRER PHOTOS •





F-T/R class competitions force shooters to engage targets at 1,000 yards with just a tactical rifle in .223 Remington or .308 Winchester, a high-quality scope and a bipod or rucksack. But these rules helped the author create a truly custom rifle with top-notch components that pushes the limits of the .308 Winchester far beyond most shooters' expectations.

• • •





Most target scopes with 1/8-MOA clicks get this kind of resolution by reducing the pitch of the internal erector screw by half, not by increasing the actual total clicks available. This means that most 1/8-MOA-click scopes have half the elevation capability of their 1/4-MOA versions. This may sound unimportant until you run out of clicks before reaching 1,000 yards and have to go back to the gunsmith to start all over again. If a 1/8-MOA scope has 50 MOA of total elevation and the action and barrel are true, the zero should end up with around 25 MOA left. Considering that most .308 rifles need over 35 MOA to reach 1,000 yards, you can predict elevation issues before even making the first barrel break-in shot.

To avoid this, the scope rail should be a 25-MOA unit, which will allow you to reach 1,000 yards or more without having to operate your scope in its internal mechanical erector travel limits—something that has proven to produce scope failures.

### PRECISION BARREL

For me, a precision rifle is all about the barrel. An accurate barrel is the most important feature a precision rifle can have, and without it, the greatest action, stock, scope and shooter will not be able to perform at their best. I learned a few things during my two first years of shooting, including who chambered some of the most accurate barrels in the World.

Mik Maksimovic from the Dolphin Gun Company is one of the leaders of the UK F-Class arena, and he's the captain of a world champion F-Class team. He is also one of the best precision gunsmiths that I know of, and he specializes in target rifles.

There are a lot of variations when it comes to .308 Winchester chambers, barrel twists and loads. So much that, without

### SPEC BOX

#### BARNARD/MCREE SINGLE SHOT

**CALIBER:** .308 Winchester

**BARREL:** 32 inches

**OA LENGTH:** 42.5-52.7 inches

**WEIGHT:** 18.1 pounds (empty)

**STOCK:** McRee CNC-machined aluminum, folding

**OPTIC:** Sightron SIII 8-32x56mm

**ACTION:** Barnard S bolt

**FINISH:** Anodized, stainless, blued

**CAPACITY:** 1

**MSRP:** N/A

guidance, you can quickly go crazy and end up spending more time at the reloading press than at the range. To cut that testing time, I chose what bullet I wanted to use and then let Mik decide the best chamber, neck and twist rate.

There are three types of ammo for F-T/R shooting: 155- or 155.5-grain light bullets from Palma at around 3,000 fps; heavy 200- to 210-grain bullets at around 2,650 fps; and 175- to 185-grain mid-weight bullets at around 2,850 fps. After hours simulating loads, paths and wind deviations in my Patagonia ColdBore 1.0 software, I chose the high-BC mid-weight bullets because they performed well in wind without the extra recoil and pressure of the 200-grain bullets.

This bullet requires a 1-in-11-inch twist barrel, and Mik selected a 32-inch, heavy-profile Bartlein barrel and cut one of his match chambers with a 0.344-inch-diameter neck. With the barreled action with trigger installed, the assembly weighed 13.4 pounds. The weight limit for an F-T/R rifle is 18 pounds, leaving 4.6 pounds for

the stock, scope and bipod. I immediately realized I had a big problem: Weight.

### CUSTOM STOCK

Scott McRee of McRee's Precision is one of the best stock-makers. He can build a modular stock for any action, rifle or barrel you can think of, and do so at an affordable price without compromising quality or performance. This is the reason why I got him involved in cutting a custom stock for my rifle, a streamlined version of his tactical stock that would be as light as physically possible.

After some months, I received a message from him telling me that he had built not one but two stocks, as it was nearly the same cost considering all the CNC programming involved. He also told me that he had a surprise for me—something he seldom did and that he wanted to contribute to my project. On the sides of the stocks, he engraved "Fontuberta Special #0001" and "#0002."

Scott did an awesome job, but although the stock is very light, it weighed a tad over 3 pounds. At that time I realized I simply could not make the weight limit. So I called Mik.

Mik's answer was to try some spiral fluting on the exterior of the barrel that removed enough steel without reducing strength. I gave him the green light, and shortly received the most impressive barrel I have ever seen. With the fluting, it's nearly a pound lighter than before, and is absolutely breathtaking in terms of looks and accuracy. The five flutes are straight for 4 inches, then turn and turn, until they straighten up for another 4 inches towards the muzzle, giving the barrel more area to dissipate heat, more structural integrity and an incredible look.

### GLASSING IT UP

I needed a light scope with clear glass, accurate clicks and a consistent and repeatable erector system. I had used a Sightron SIII scope to win the Fifty Caliber Shooters' Association World Champion-



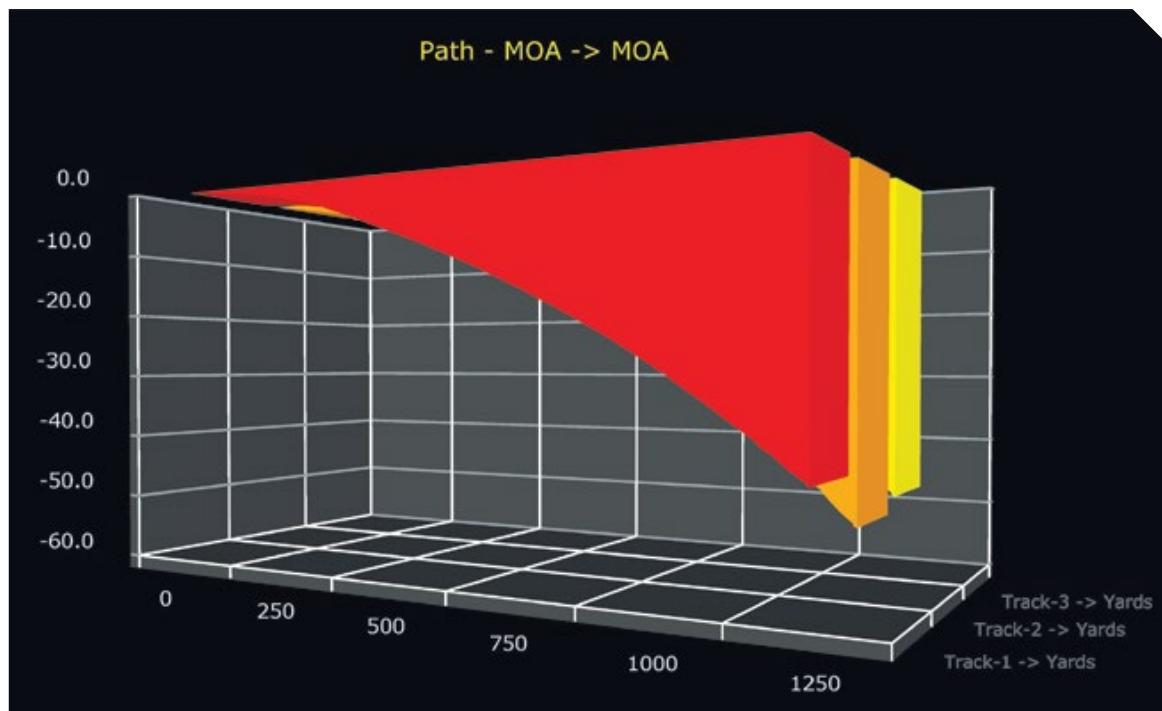
# “If you have a rifle capable of sub-¼-MOA groups and can read the wind correctly, you can win any F-Class competition.”

The custom .308's handload (in red) holds 28.3 MOA at 1,000 yards, while the 180-grain, .300 WM Remington AccuPoint (orange) and Winchester Ballistic Tip (yellow) hold 31.2 and 32.2 MOA, respectively.

ship with my Steyr HS .50 rifle, so I decided to order another SIII scope, an 8-32x56mm model with an LRMOA reticle. I really like the reticle's MOA index lines, which help me place the point of aim precisely were I want it by aligning the marks with the MOA-spaced bulls on the target.

Sightron's SIII scopes have proven that they are .50 BMG proof, accurate, repeatable and have lenses on par with models costing much more. Choosing the scope was easy, as no other premium optics are as light as the SIII, but regarding the rings, there was a lot of confusion and a lack of data about their true weight. Thankfully, I scored Brownells' super-light 30mm Picatinny aluminum rings, which kept the whole scope/ring assembly to an incredible 1.93 pounds.

The last piece of kit I needed was an ultra-light bipod, and I asked a friend for help on this one, too. I wanted a folding



bipod to avoid having to take it apart every time I moved from one firing position to the next. So I asked my friend Dario, who works for the aerospace industry in southern Spain, if he could build one for me. I told him what I wanted, and he even refined my design with his high-tech know-how and expertise.

On sale in Spain now and soon in the U.S., distributed by U.S. Tactical Supply, the Milypol bipod is made with the same materials and on the same machinery as Airbus airliners. Weighing only 1.25

pounds, it is easily one of the best, lightest and most stable folding bipods out there.

## MAGNUM CLASS

The whole F-Class game is really the combination of extremely accurate rifles and guru-like wind reading. If you have a rifle capable of sub-¼-MOA groups and can read the wind correctly,

you can win any F-Class competition. This is way more complex than it seems, and the wind catches all shooters off guard at some point or another. The trick here is how many times it does, and how it will affect your score.

The huge surprise came when I received the barreled action from Dolphin and saw the printout of the chonographed speeds from Mik's loads. Using new Lapua brass, CCI BR2 primers and Swiss TR-140 powder, he had pushed 185-grain Berger bullets to 2,870 fps on average. I said to myself, "Now this is .300 Win Mag performance!" How was this possible?

I then checked some commercial loads for the .300 Win Mag, including the Remington 180-grain AccuPoint and the Winchester 180-grain Ballistic Tip. When I ran some numbers on my Patagonia Cold-Bore 1.0 software and saw the comparison graphs and drop values, my jaw dropped open. We had made a .308 Winchester that could out-perform commercial .300 Win Mag loads. Yes, the rifle has a 32-inch barrel and was using handloads, but this is one hell of a feat when you compare both cases side by side.

With a 100-yard zero, my custom .308 had a 28.3-MOA path, while the .300 Win Mag Remington and Winchester loads had 31.2- and 32.2-MOA loads respectively. The path and wind graphs are very descriptive about the performance advantage of this

## PERFORMANCE: CUSTOM .308

DISTANCE	VELOCITY	DROP	PATH	WIND DRIFT
0	2,870.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
100	2,707.3	-2.1	0.0	-0.5
200	2,549.3	-4.4	-1.3	-1.0
300	2,396.1	-6.8	-3.5	-1.5
400	2,247.7	-9.5	-6.0	-2.1
500	2,104.0	-12.4	-8.8	-2.7
600	1,965.0	-15.6	-11.9	-3.4
700	1,830.8	-19.1	-15.4	-4.1
800	1,701.3	-23.0	-19.3	-4.8
900	1,576.6	-27.3	-23.5	-5.6
1,000	1,456.6	-32.1	-28.3	-6.5
1,100	1,342.0	-37.5	-33.7	-7.4
1,200	1,235.9	-43.4	-39.6	-8.4



Distance in yards, velocity in fps, and drop, path and wind drift in MOA.



## BARNARD/MCREE .308

custom .308, which I've dubbed the "Fontcuberta Special," over the typical hunting .300 Win Mag factory load.

What's the point of comparing a .300 Win Mag to a .308 Winchester? It shows that competitive F-T/R shooters have truly pushed the .308 Winchester to its limits, and proven that if you build a rifle with all the right components, you can make some truly incredible shots. **TW**

## GET SMART ABOUT YOUR DOPE

The PDA has been used in sniper applications for more than a decade, and has served us well in combat. I understand that many users may have acquired expensive PDAs recently, but technology is too fast for military programs, so civilians end up using lighter and better hardware and software. In fact, the military's ruggedized PDAs can't compete with modern smartphones, which are more powerful, one-third the size and weight, and one-fifth the price—while offering cell phone, Bluetooth, Wi-Fi, GSP and memory storage capabilities.



### SMARTPHONE SURGE:

Smartphones have long run times, and good software is now finally available on the market. If you shoot at extreme ranges, you know that some smartphone ballistic software apps just don't cut it. Well, not anymore, as Patagonia's ColdBore 1.0 software is now available for smartphones. I use it on my Nokia Windows phone, and the results are outstanding. For more information, visit [patagoniaballistics.com](http://patagoniaballistics.com).

## INFO BOX

**BARNARD PRECISION**  
[barnard.co.nz](http://barnard.co.nz)

**DOLPHIN GUN COMPANY**  
[dolphinguncompany.co.uk](http://dolphinguncompany.co.uk)

**MCREE'S PRECISION**  
[mcreesprecision.net](http://mcreesprecision.net)

**SIGHTRON**  
[sightron.com](http://sightron.com); 919-562-3000

**U.S. TACTICAL SUPPLY**  
[ustacticalsupply.com](http://ustacticalsupply.com); 541-928-8645

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# NEW MISSION GEAR



## → SEEKINS PRECISION K20 ANGLED GRIP

Designed as a lightweight, ergonomic alternative to the standard forward hand grip, Seekins Precision's new K20 is CNC machined from a billet of aluminum and weighs only 1.6 ounces. It also features an integrated sling mount and an anodized finish. The K20's angled grip surface helps diminish felt recoil and provides the shooter with better overall stability when firing. Seekins Precision will be manufacturing the K20 in both KeyMod and M-LOK configurations in a number of anodized colors so shooters can truly customize their rifles. ([seekinsprecision.com](http://seekinsprecision.com); 208-743-3400)

## → SIG SAUER SUPERSONIC 300 BLK AMMO

Sig Sauer is now offering new supersonic, match-grade 300 Blackout ammo as part of its Elite Performance line. This supersonic round features a 125-grain Sierra MatchKing projectile and, like Sig's 220-grain subsonic 300 Blackout round, is designed to bring out the best in today's high-performance AR rifles. The Sierra MatchKing projectiles in the 300 Blackout supersonic rounds are renowned for their superior accuracy, flat trajectory and consistent point of impact. The unique hybrid hollow-point bullet design also ensures maximum expansion on impact. These cartridges feature match-grade brass cases and function with standard 5.56mm magazines without a reduction in capacity. ([sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com); 603-610-3000)



## → RAT WORX ZRX 9mm TAVOR SUPPRESSOR

Research And Testing (RAT) Worx USA, using the cutting-edge ARCligh Forearm design from Manticore Arms, recently developed a suppressor for 9mm IWI Tavor SAR rifles. The overall system will only add an astounding 2.75 inches of length to your bullpup rifle. With the ARCligh system, you can install almost any grip, light, laser or pressure switch, and the ZRX suppressor gives you unparalleled noise and recoil reduction in a compact package that only adds about 20 ounces to your rifle. When all is said and done, the rifle's center of balance still sits nearly directly over the grip and trigger. ([ratworxusa.com](http://ratworxusa.com); 800-675-6906)



## → STEEL WILL CHIEFTAIN

Steel Will Knives has unveiled its newest American-made knife, the Chieftain 1610/1620. This tactical knife has a classic clip-point blade built to perform for any mission, in any environment. The Chieftain's 7.48-inch blade is made of 1095 steel that is heat treated and then finished with a black traction coating for additional protection. The full-tang construction forms a multi-purpose hammer/glass-breaker, and the Micarta handle is available in orange (1610) and green (1620). The Chieftain securely stores in a nylon sheath that is simple to clean and adapts to packs or belts. ([steelwillknives.com](http://steelwillknives.com); 877-969-0909)



## → GEMTECH 300 BLK AMMO

The 300 Blackout has taken the tactical market by storm because of its versatility and reliability in AR-platform rifles, and Gemtech is one of the companies leading the way. It recently unveiled three new 300 BLK offerings. The first is a supersonic, 125-grain Nosler hunting load that delivers not only the ballistic performance that you demand but also the smooth extraction and reliable feeding you need out in the field. The second is a supersonic, 147-grain FMJ round that should serve as an economical training option. Gemtech's third new offering is a subsonic, 220-grain load featuring the Sierra MatchKing (SMK) hollow-point, boat-tail projectile. ([gem-tech.com](http://gem-tech.com); 208-939-7222)



## → MID AMERICA ARMAMENT R.T.D.

Mid America Armament recently unveiled its new Rapid Take Down (R.T.D.) kit, which will transform any existing AR-platform rifle or pistol into a detachable-barrel system. With the included steel, low-profile gas block, proprietary barrel nut and free-floating handguard, this kit makes it easy to break down your firearm quickly for storage, transport or caliber conversions (barrel not included). The sleek handguards have several strips of KeyMod slots that help reduce weight and also make it easy to add mission-critical accessories to your carbine like lights, lasers and other enhancements. The handguards are available in several colors and lengths, from 7.5-15 inches. Finally, the R.T.D. kit is 100 percent made in the USA. ([midamericaarmament.com](http://midamericaarmament.com); 918-825-2715)



Continued from page 33



## RUGER SR-762

True to its reputation for ruggedness, Ruger's SR-762 rifle is a solid performer. Using a chrome-plated gas piston system, the SR-762 runs clean and cool. The chrome-lined, 16.12-inch barrel is fluted, threaded and topped with a Mini-14-style flash suppressor. A Hogue Monogrip and adjustable buttstock are standard. ([ruger.com](http://ruger.com))

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16.12 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	34.75-38 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8.6 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Flip-up front and rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	Piston-operated semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,269



## SEEKINS PRECISION SP10

Fitted with an 18-inch, stainless steel, match barrel and a 3.5-pound CMC trigger, shooters will be able to get accurate rounds on target with ease using the SP10 in 7.62mm NATO from Seekins Precision. The gun is fully ambidextrous and is fitted with popular furniture, including an Ergo pistol grip and Magpul STR stock. The bottom of the free-floating handguard is flat, allowing for better stability when shooting off of a bag or other rest. ([seekinsprecision.com](http://seekinsprecision.com); 208-743-3400)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	18 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	38-40 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	8.9 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Magpul STR
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,489



## SIG SAUER SIG716 PATROL

A .30-caliber evolution of the popular SIG516 platform, the SIG716 Patrol rifle uses a short-stroke pushrod operating system to keep things reliably running. Standard features on the gun include a free-floated, quad-rail handguard, folding iron sights, an adjustable stock and Magpul 20-round PMAGs. Additionally, the gun includes QD-type sling attachment points. ([sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com); 603-610-3000)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	35.1-38.3 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	9.3 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Folding front and rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	Piston-operated semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,399



## SMITH & WESSON M&P10

Smith & Wesson offers a feature-packed .308/7.62mm rifle at a very affordable price point. The M&P10 comes standard with an ambidextrous magazine release and bolt catch. Additionally, the safety selector is reversible. An adjustable buttstock is standard on the M&P10. The barrel is 18 inches long with 5R rifling, and it's capped with the company's enhanced flash suppressor. ([smith-wesson.com](http://smith-wesson.com) ; 800-331-0852)

### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	18 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	37.6-40.9 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	7.71 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,619





#### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	33-36.5 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	6 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Lightweight BattleAx CQB
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Pump
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	10+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$899

## TROY PUMP ACTION RIFLE

Distinctly different, the Troy Pump Action Rifle (PAR) is a manually operated, AR-style rifle that is legal in all 50 states. The PAR comes with the Lightweight BattleAx CQB stock that has a large storage compartment, and the Alpha Rail handguard integrates with the pump action to be both functional and stylish. Since the gun does not need the semi-automatic action parts, the PAR is lighter than you might expect for a .308/7.62mm, making it a good choice for a variety of duties. ([troydefense.com](http://troydefense.com); 413-788-4214)



#### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	14.7 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	33.25-36.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	7.65 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Wilson/Rogers Super-Stoc
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Armor-Tuff
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$2,995

## WILSON COMBAT BILLET-AR

Lightweight and accurate are two words that describe the .308 Winchester/7.62mm NATO BILlet-AR rifles from Wilson Combat. These rifles use match-grade, fluted barrels with pinned, three-prong flash suppressor. Wilson Combat uses the company's own drop-in Tactical Trigger Unit to provide a clean pull and crisp break. The TRIM handguard is lightweight, free-floating and offers shooters the ability to easily add a light, laser or other accessories. ([wilsoncombat.com](http://wilsoncombat.com); 800-955-4856)

#### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	7.62mm NATO
<b>BARREL:</b>	16.5 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	34.19-38 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	7.55 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	20+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,413



## WINDHAM WEAPONRY SRC-308


A solid, well-balanced performer, the SRC-308 from Windham Weaponry checks a lot of boxes when shopping for a .30-caliber rifle. This rifle uses a traditional gas impingement system with a forged receiver and a bolt made of Carpenter 158 steel. The 16.5-inch barrel is chrome lined and fitted with an A2-style flash suppressor. The six-position-adjustable stock and Hogue pistol grip ensure the gun will comfortably fit most any shooter. ([windhamweaponry.com](http://windhamweaponry.com); 855-808-1888)

#### SPEC BOX

<b>CALIBER:</b>	300 BLK
<b>BARREL:</b>	16 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	32.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	6.3 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Collapsible
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	None
<b>ACTION:</b>	Direct impingement semi-auto
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	30+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	\$1,338



## YANKEE HILL MACHINE YHM-8305-300

A full-featured AR-15 rifle, the Yankee Hill Machine YHM-8305-300 is chambered in 300 Blackout. The rifle uses the mid-length KR7 KeyMod handguard to allow for the attachment of accessories while keeping the weight down to 6.3 pounds unloaded. The KR7 is octagonal with seven of the eight sides allowing for the attachment of KeyMod accessories. The threaded, 16-inch barrel comes with the company's very popular Phantom flash suppressor. ([yhm.net](http://yhm.net); 877-892-6533) 



## SIG SAUER MCX

Continued from page 12

make quick follow-up shots. I was most impressed at how controllable the MCX was when firing on full-auto. It's certainly not a spray-and-pray weapon. Instead, it feels like you can simply guide the rounds exactly where you want them to hit. Of course, this might be different with supersonic ammo. I attached a SRD762-QDTi suppressor to the MCX, and it became very quiet. With the Silencer attached, the loudest part was the round hitting the backstop.

I was not able to formally test the MCX's precision, but my test carbines were at least combat accurate off-hand, and I can see shooters obtaining sub-MOA results. In fact, I have personally witnessed the MCX SBR shoot sub-MOA groups at 100 yards. The actual accuracy requirement for the MCX during development was 2 MOA at 100 yards with subsonic ammunition. The prototype MCX met that requirement with a 6.75-inch barrel.

It's obvious that Sig Sauer is quickly becoming a supplier of complete weapons systems, from firearms to ammunition, suppressors, sights and other accessories. This may not be a new concept, but it is advantageous for you to have a company like Sig Sauer backing up your new platforms over the long term.

## SPEC BOX

### SIG SAUER MCX

<b>CALBER:</b>	300 BLK, 5.56mm NATO, 7.62x39mm
<b>BARREL:</b>	9 or 16 inches
<b>OA LENGTH:</b>	26.63-35.75 inches
<b>WEIGHT:</b>	5.75-6 pounds (empty)
<b>STOCK:</b>	Multiple configurations
<b>SIGHTS:</b>	Flip-up front and rear
<b>ACTION:</b>	Semi-auto or select-fire
<b>FINISH:</b>	Matte black
<b>CAPACITY:</b>	30+1
<b>MSRP:</b>	N/A

Building the MCX from the ground up as a suppressor-ready platform specifically for the 300 BLK is promising, and it shows that the 300 BLK is only moving forward. The fact that the carbine can be quickly switched to 5.56mm NATO or 7.62x39mm, or to an SBR with a side-folding stock, for example, is just icing on the cake.

I'm aware that the MCX has been used in theater, and the reports on its functioning have been positive. For more information, visit [sigsauer.com](http://sigsauer.com) or call 603-610-3000. **TW**

## CUSTOM MOSIN-NAGANT

Continued from page 79

barreled action and magazine were Dura-Coated. When the milling, drilling, hacking and bedding was finally finished and the Leupold was mounted, the difference was night and day. The rifle was transformed from a well-worn warhorse with flaking wood varnish, sights built to aim here and hit there on the battlefield, and a shoulder-thumping steel buttplate into a good utilitarian sporter with oiled wood, a passable recoil pad, a more uniform and rust-resistant steel surface finish, a shorter barrel for easier maneuvering and a fully adjustable and precise sighting system.

## PAPER PUNCHING

With two commercial loads and one 1978 surplus Russian sardine-can load, firing the "new" sporter was quite a change from shooting a Mosin-Nagant in full military trim. The stock and scope height was a better fit for my long neck; the glass showed a very clear 100-yard bullseye; the straight, extended bolt handle introduced infinitely better leverage in opening the action (especially noticeable on the Hornady steel-cased loads that tend to give my Mosin-Nagants fits on opening); the bolt remained smooth and easy all the way through the session (which isn't always the case with un-modified Mosin-Nagants); and the 8-pound rifle's recoil was distinctly softer on the shoulder than in its original military configuration.

Mosin-Nagant barrels can vary greatly, and yours may do better than mine, which created a best three-shot, 100-yard group measuring 0.75 inches with Hornady's 174-grain BTHP hunting round, but I can live with that kind of accuracy.

The cost of the additions is probably about three times what the rifle's worth now, but sometimes value just isn't the decider. I can truthfully say that nobody else has a Mosin-Nagant just like mine. If you're interested in giving an old gun a new life, the Mosin-Nagant is a great place to start. **TW**

## MEET SIG'S TOP GUNS

**S**ig Sauer is throwing its full support and resources behind Team Sig, the newly formed competitive shooting squad. Featuring more than 25 competitors, Team Sig has a level of backing unprecedented in the shooting industry. Under the leadership of World Champion shooter Max Michel, Jr., and team manager Bruce Gray, Team Sig will be competing at matches across the country and around the world.

Team Sig members will compete in USPSA, 3-Gun and multi-gun, Steel Challenge, IDPA and NRA Action Pistol matches, with a focus on using the new, ultra-versatile P320 modular handgun platform.

Team Sig features shooters from all of the action shooting sports, from a variety of experience levels and backgrounds. Team Sig shooters range from Grand Masters to the unclassified in both civilian and law enforcement realms. "We wanted to assemble a team with as much diversity as possible," said Tom Taylor, vice president of marketing and commercial sales for Sig Sauer. "Since the P320 is a do-everything handgun, we needed a team that also does everything."



Team manager Bruce Gray won the 2015 Flagler Cup in Production with a Sig P320.

In addition to supporting Sig at matches, the team was also built to provide education and training for competitive shooters, regardless of skill level. "We're looking forward to bringing you stories and experiences from shooters excited about the P320 platform," Coach Bruce Gray said. "We have some great personalities on the team, and you will be able to follow not just Grand Master shooters, but B-class, A-class, Marksmen and Sharpshooters as they train, compete and improve." For more information, visit [teamsigsauer.com](http://teamsigsauer.com).

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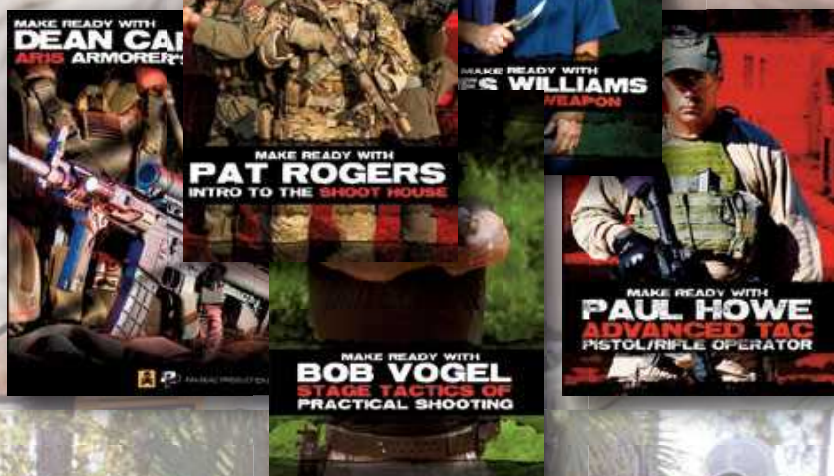
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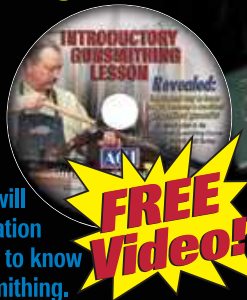
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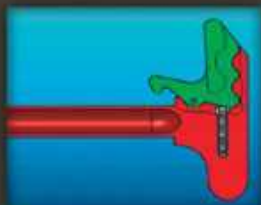


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Phoenix police officers respond to. Phoenix is also a very large metropolitan area with over 1.4 million residents, plus a large number of tourists and travelers who pass through this jurisdiction on local roads and interstate highways.

The interesting thing about the field test that took place in Phoenix last year is that the PPD decided to include Arizona State University as a research partner before officially adopting this technology on a large-scale basis. The purpose of this research component was to compare the results of every action taken by police officers who wear the VIEVU body-worn camera to the actions taken by officers who are not currently wearing body-worn cameras on duty.

While conducting this comprehensive evaluation, the PPD documented the results of using the VIEVU to collect and review tamper-proof videotaped evidence for the purposes of ensuring successful prosecutions. The PPD was also looking to evaluate the effectiveness of the VIEVU to resolve complaints against officers and help build trust with members of the community. These recordings have helped the PPD evaluate performance in the field and make necessary modifications to its training programs, especially to officer safety training. The PPD also examined the use of this technology in the field to deter unprofessional conduct, which would normally result in the need to perform a time-consuming and expensive internal affairs investigation. It should also be noted that since elements of the PPD began using the VIEVU LE2 model, an upgraded version of the VIEVU called the "LE3" has become available for field use.

**DIGITAL EYES HAVE IT:** VIEVU body-worn cameras are currently being used by over 4,000 law enforcement agencies in 17 countries. Here in the U.S., VIEVU cameras are issued to sworn personnel in such agencies as the PPD; the Oakland, California, Police Department; the Houston, Texas, Police Department; and the Dallas, Texas, Police Department. After investigating the use of the VIEVU body-worn camera system, it seems clear that this technology has a proven track record for documenting events as they occurred in a tamper-proof fashion. Having this capability is proving to be an invaluable piece of equipment in a day and age when law enforcement officers are under constant scrutiny. For more, visit [viewu.com](http://viewu.com) or call 888-285-4548. 

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# WHERE ARE OUR LEADERS?

In recent years, my beloved Marine Corps has worked its way through issues like LGBTs, in the military and women in combat. But these brushfires are trivial compared to the tasks facing the Marine Commandant—and indeed all top military leaders—over our disappearing cadres of NCOs, the men and women in small units who make the right things happen, 24/7, on every mission.

Corporals and sergeants—the NCOs—are the backbone of our Marine Corps and Army

General Joseph Dunford told the Navy League's Sea-Air-Space Exposition that the Marine Corps needs to boost the number of sergeants and make up for a lack of experienced small-unit leadership.

The current number of NCOs in the ranks "does not meet our force structure requirements," General Dunford said. "My primary focus now concerns our enlisted leadership." He indicated changes are coming within the Corps to make up for the NCO shortfall and increase the experience and

hardened commander of the Afghanistan war coalition, top military schooling and master's degrees in government from Georgetown University and international relations from Tufts. He is 59 and a graduate of the U.S. Army Ranger School and the Marine Amphibious Warfare School. He is the son of a retired Boston police officer who served in the Marines in Korea.

Prior to General Dunford's speech, Army Chief of Staff General Ray Odierno told an AUSA Institute symposium, "The unrelenting budget impasse has compelled us to degrade readiness to historic low levels..."

What keeps me up at night more than anything else is that I might get a mission to send some of our soldiers and we haven't properly trained them or given them the right equipment to do their job."

Army chief of staff since September of 2011, General Odierno is slated to retire this fall. President Obama has nominated Gen. Mark Milley, an Ivy League (Princeton) grad and career grunt, to replace General Odierno.

Your Gunny has not chosen the word "backbone" in a haphazard way to describe the Draconian cuts being faced by these top generals. (Cuts that will be even more severe if sequestration occurs in 2016!) The word pops into my mind quite often because it is the title of the book I have recommended more than any other over the years since it was first published in 2011. Writer Julia Dye's *Backbone: History, Traditions, and Leadership Lessons*

of Marine Corps NCOs focuses on the roles of NCOs in actual boots-on-the-ground situations. She shows how these leaders evolve over time and how their decisions and actions become game-changers in the face of danger and difficulties of all types. If you're interested in the subject of leadership and don't check out *Backbone*, your coconut isn't screwed on right.

General Dunford has formed a task force to study the NCO situation, and he and the Corps will need all the facts, inspiration and wisdom they can bring to bear on the current problem. Excuse the "I told you so!" rant, but it's a fact that your Gunny has been harping on this subject a lot in recent years. In the manpower cuts we have endured, we have seen countless Marines who enlisted intending to make the service their careers forced out by being unable to reenlist. Forced out, not by lack of interest or performance, but by the numbers crunch. When reenlistment opportunities aren't available, full retirement benefits are thrown overboard. You get VA hospital care. That's about it.

During the filming of 11 episodes of my new show, *Gunny-Time* on the Outdoor Channel this year, this old Devil Dog has felt like a kid at Christmas playing with new toys. I've been shooting stuff, blowing up stuff and even driving neat stuff—all of which I wish I had my hands on back in the day. Such weaponry is critical, I'll grant you that. But the greatest tactical weapon we can put into the field is the trained and experienced NCO, our military's backbone. And right now we're running woefully short in that area.

Semper Fi!

A student "presents guidon" during a three-week course focusing on the traditions and leadership of Marine Corps corporals.

training of small-unit leaders.

These are the numbers he cited: About 60 percent of the current 190,000 Marines are on their first enlistment, and 40 percent of the Corps is ranked below E-3 (lance corporal). General Dunford said a sergeant shortage was a major factor in a reduced state of readiness of stateside Marines, which he pegged at about 50 percent. It's an area of real concern for General Dunford. "Given the increased number of threats in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, we approach the future with humility."

That's straight-from-the-shoulders talk by our top Marine, an infantry officer with a an outstanding triple-edged record as a combat-

small-unit combat operations. They are the vital link between the commanding officers and the troops who will be carrying out their unit's mission. And right now, they are disappearing.

The problem is so severe that it has recently brought our top Marine and Army generals to speakers' podiums. Only a month before he was named to head the combined Joint Chiefs of Staff, Marine Commandant

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